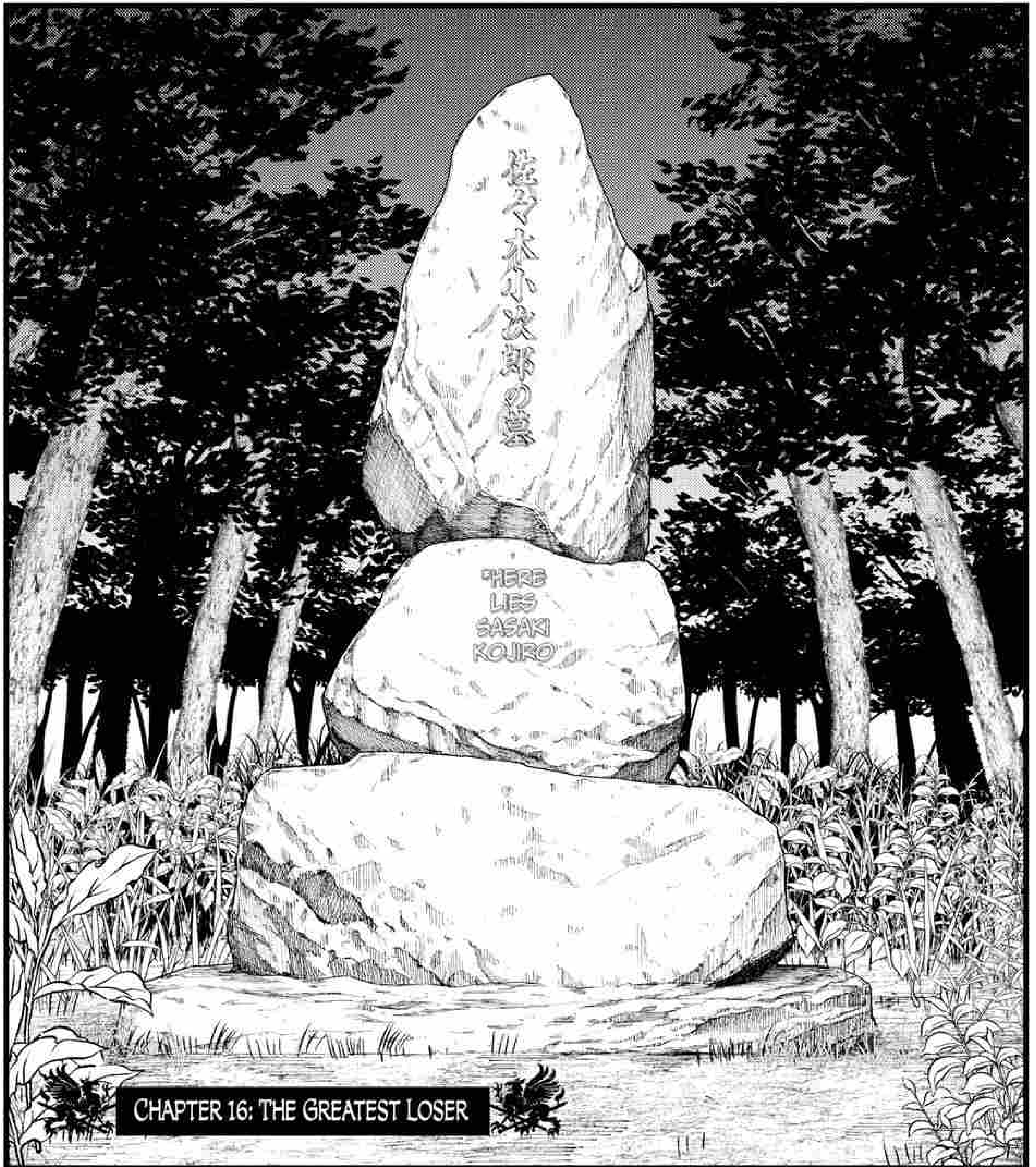


SASAKI KOJIRO NEVER ONCE...



...WON A BATTLE IN
HIS ENTIRE LIFE.



富田道場

*TODA DOJO



LATE SENGOKU PERIOD
ICHIJODANI CASTLE TOWN
ECHIZEN PROVINCE



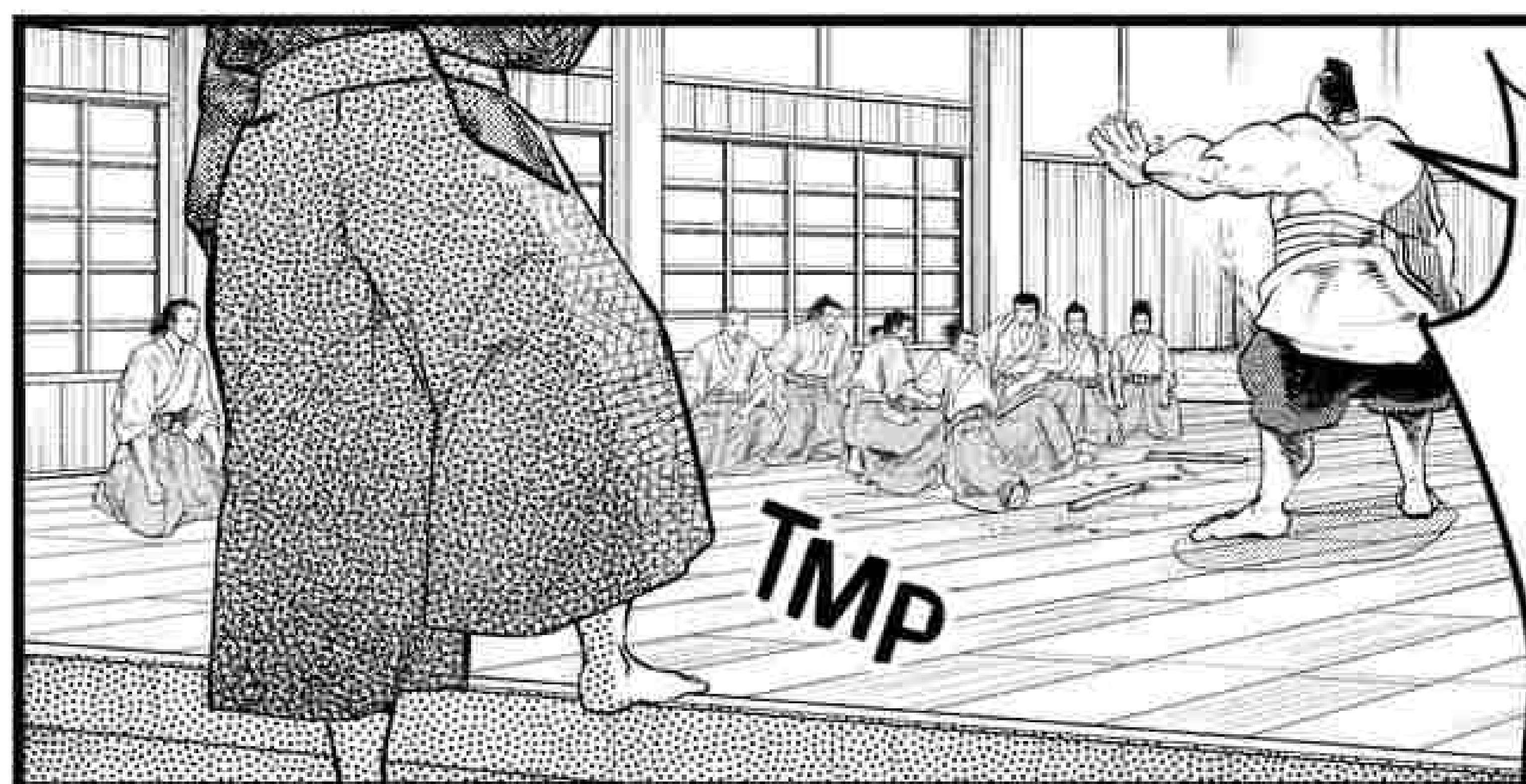


TODA KAGEKATSU
NEPHEW OF TODA SEIGEN



YOU'RE ALL
SLACKERS!

YOU
SONS OF
BITCHES!



LISTEN! ON THE
BATTLEFIELD,
LOSING FOCUS
FOR EVEN A
MOMENT WILL
GET YOU KILLED!



...THIS
BOY...

AAAH
...

AT THE
DOJO
OF THE
RENOWNED
SWORDS-
MAN
TODA
SEIGEN...



...WAS
CONSIDERED
THE BLACK
SHEEP.

SKCH
SKCH



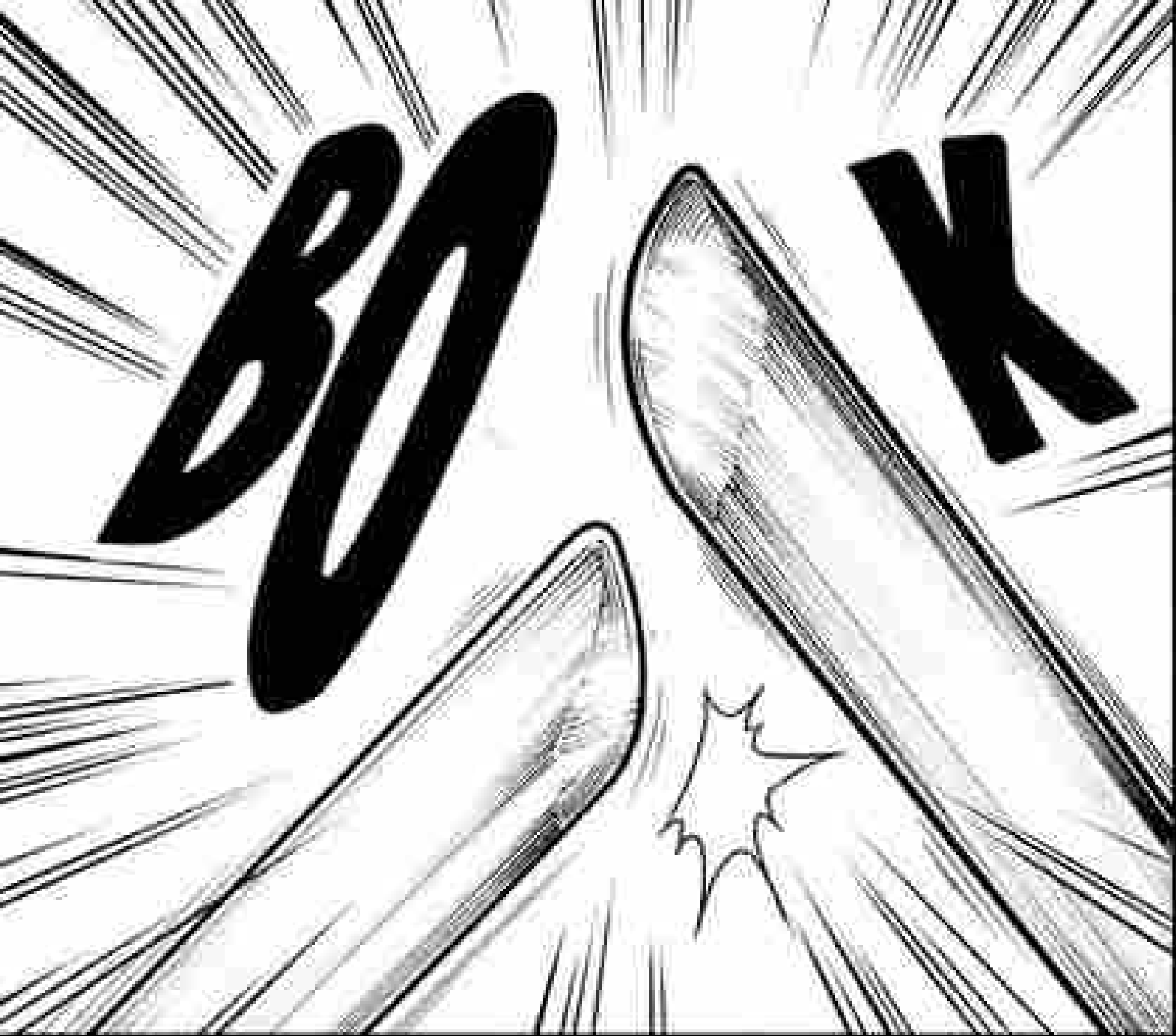
SASAKI
...!

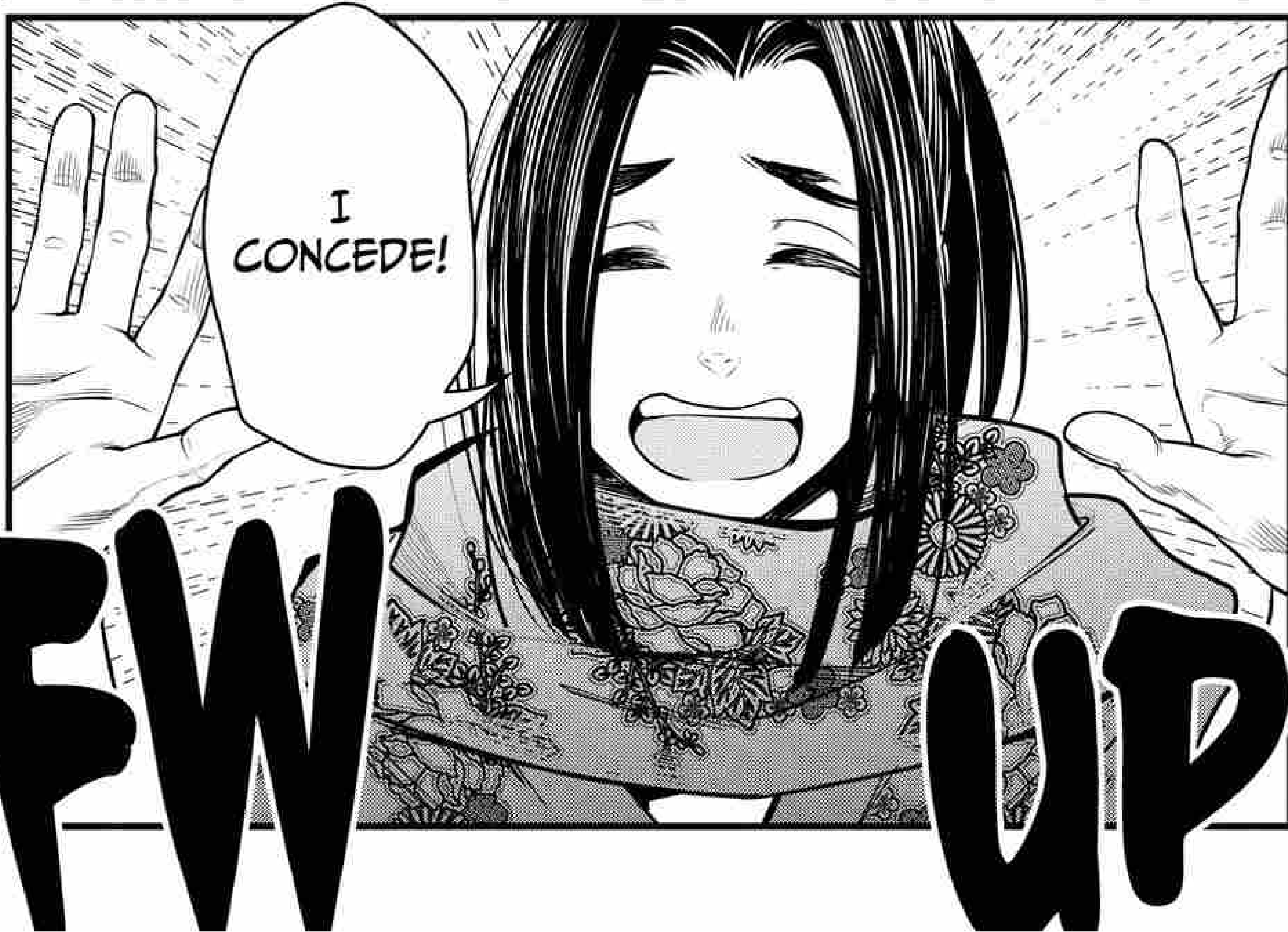


OH HEY,
KAGEKATSU-
DONO.
GOOD
MORNING.











Y-YOU
CONCEDE
...?



YES.

YOU WIN,
KAGEKATSU-
DONO.



IF YOU LOSE
YOUR SWORD,
USE YOUR
FISTS! IF YOU
LOSE YOUR
FISTS, USE
YOUR TEETH!

NEVER
STOP
FIGHTING,
EVER!

Y-YOU...!
AND YOU
CALL YOUR-
SELF A
WARRIOR?!



BUT
FATHER,
HE'S...



TODA KAGEMASA
TODA SEIGEN'S YOUNGER BROTHER
ACTING MASTER



THAT'S
ENOUGH,
KAGEKATSU.
YOUR WORDS
ARE WASTED
ON HIM.



KOJIRO
DOESN'T
HAVE THE
TALENT.
THERE'S
NO POINT
IN KEEPING
HIM AT THIS
DOJO.

SEIGEN
...



HMM...



SKCH

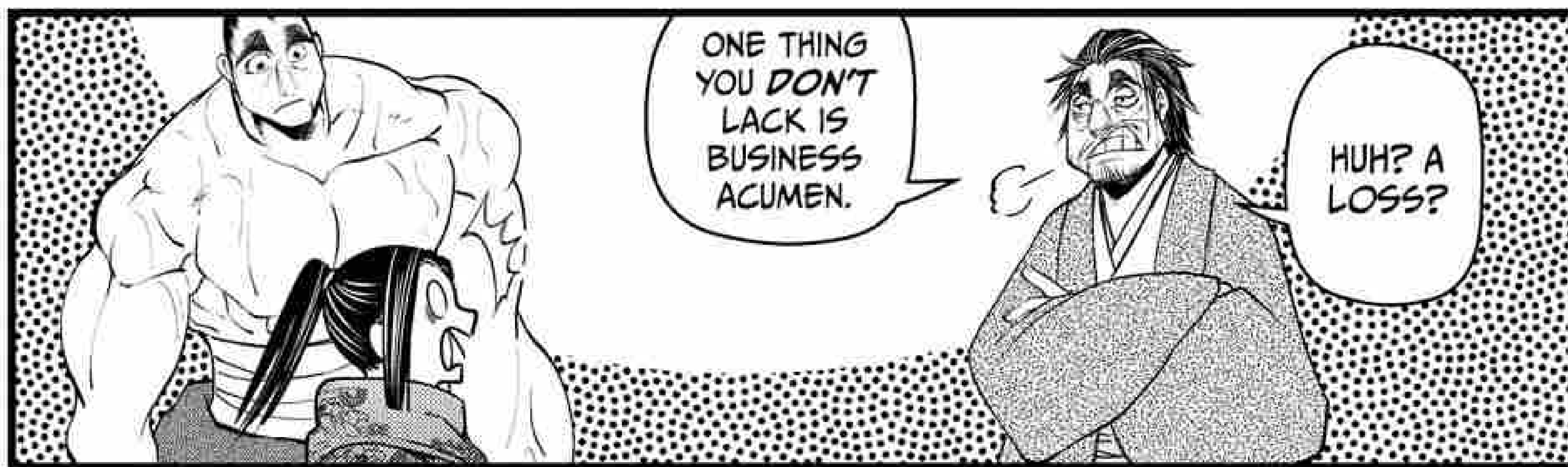


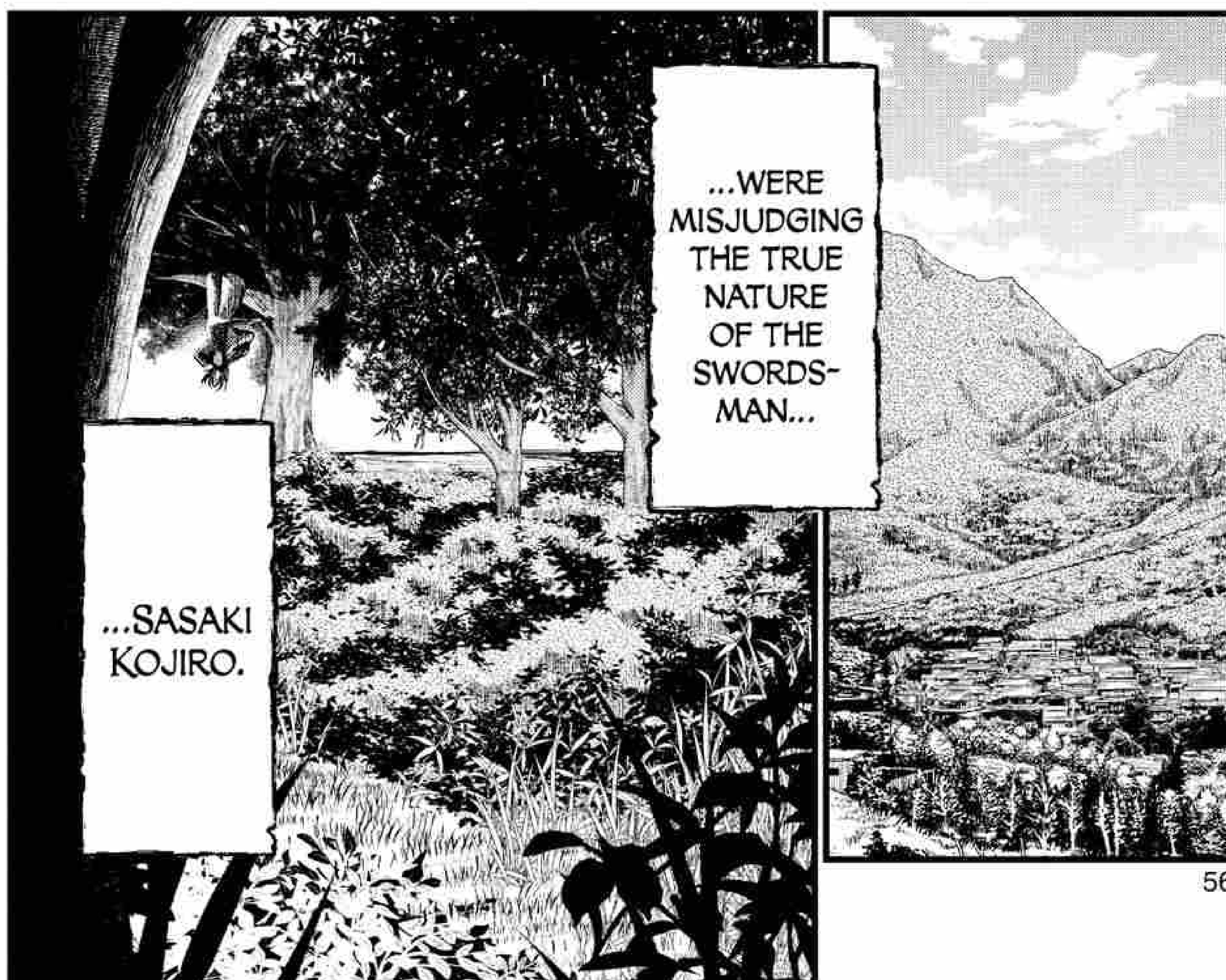
WHY
DID YOU
CONCEDE
SO
QUICKLY?

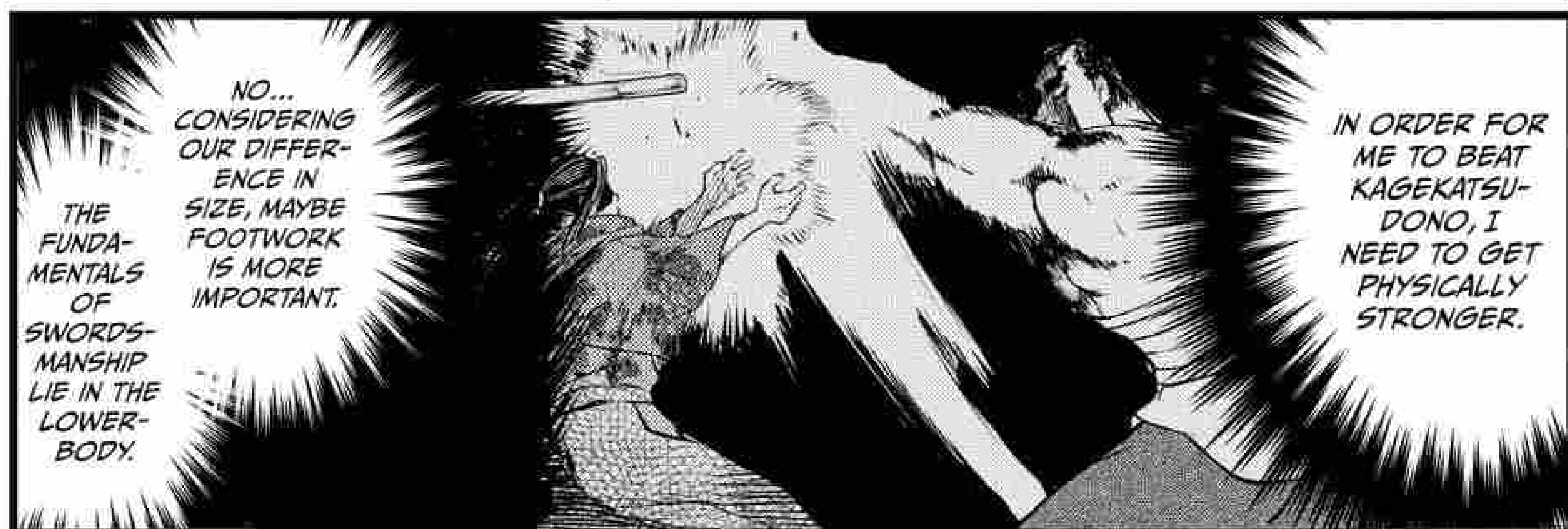
KOJIRO...

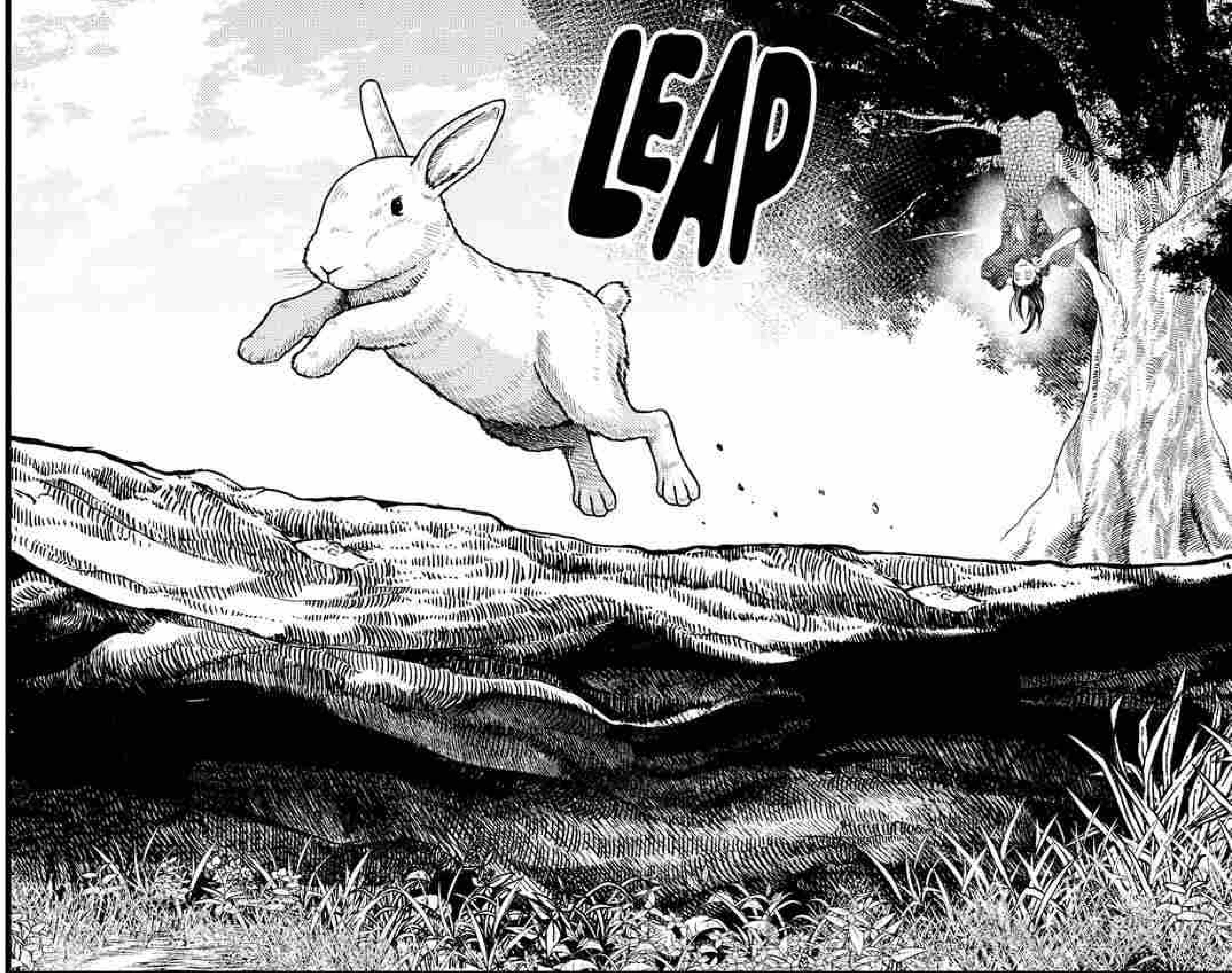


TODA SEIGEN
KODACHI MUSO
(MASTER OF THE SHORT SWORD)
FOUNDER OF THE TODA
SCHOOL OF SWORDSMANSHIP











HEY!

TP
TP
TP



WHAT I NEED
IS THIS KIND
OF DYNAMIC
MOVEMENT!

THIS IS IT!
THIS IS
IT!

SPR

OING



BTMP

HEY,
WHERE
YOU
GOIN'?!



SNAP
KRAK

WAAA!

KRNGH

WHIMP

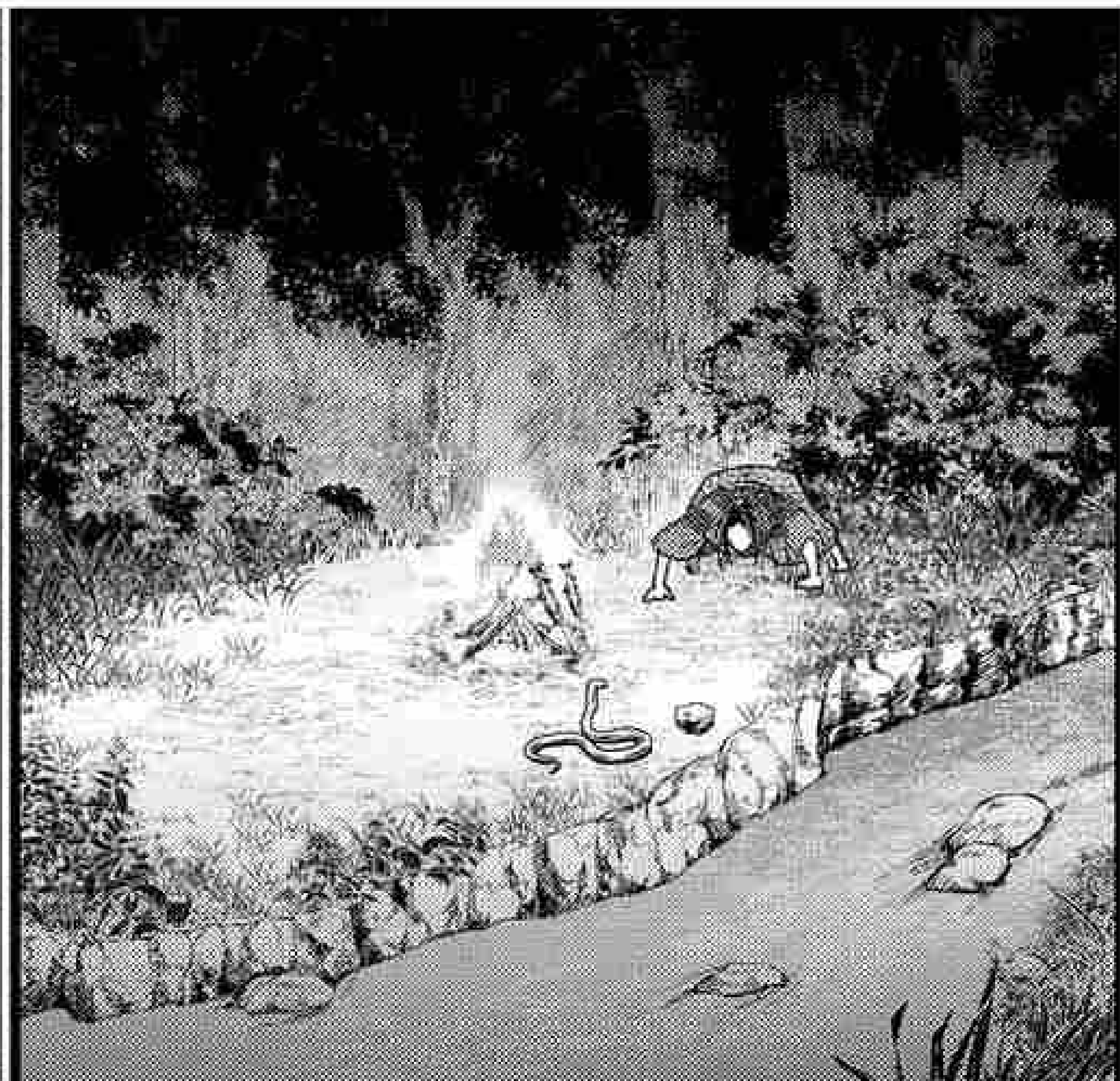
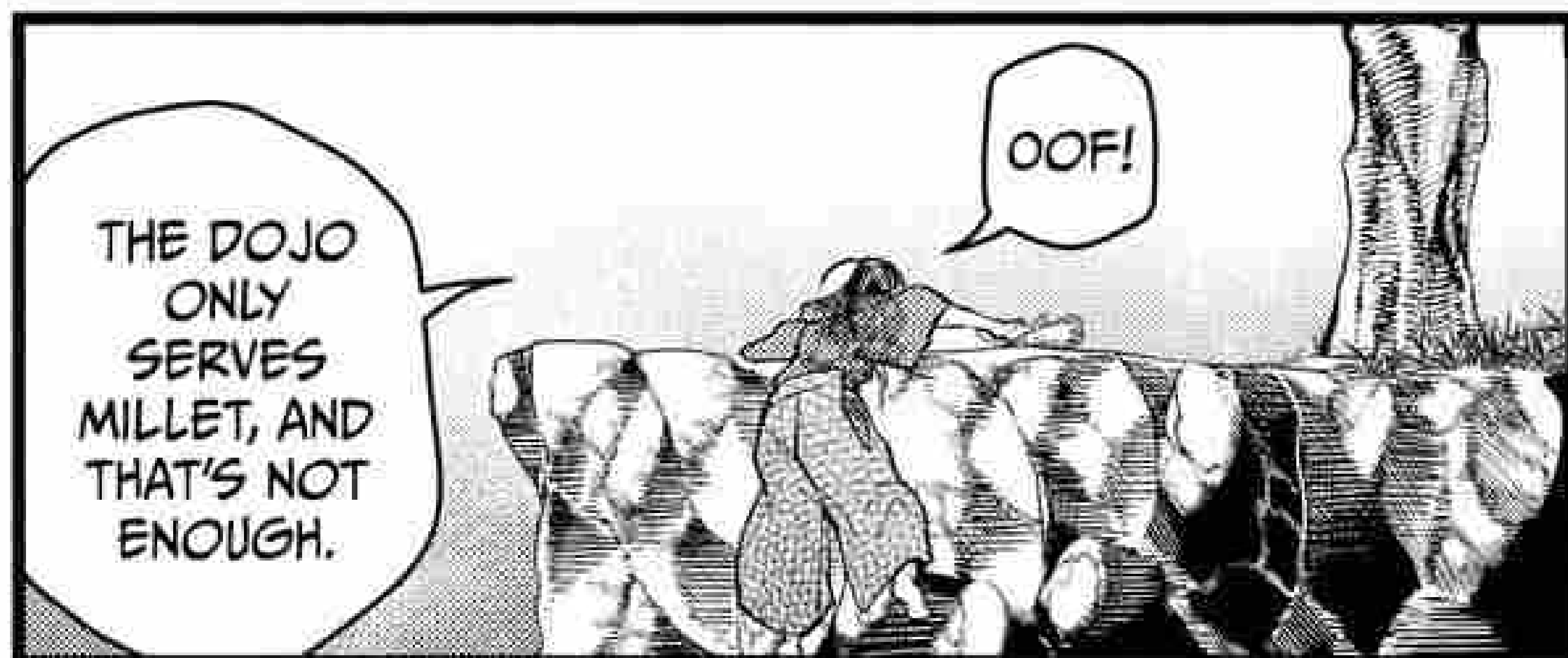


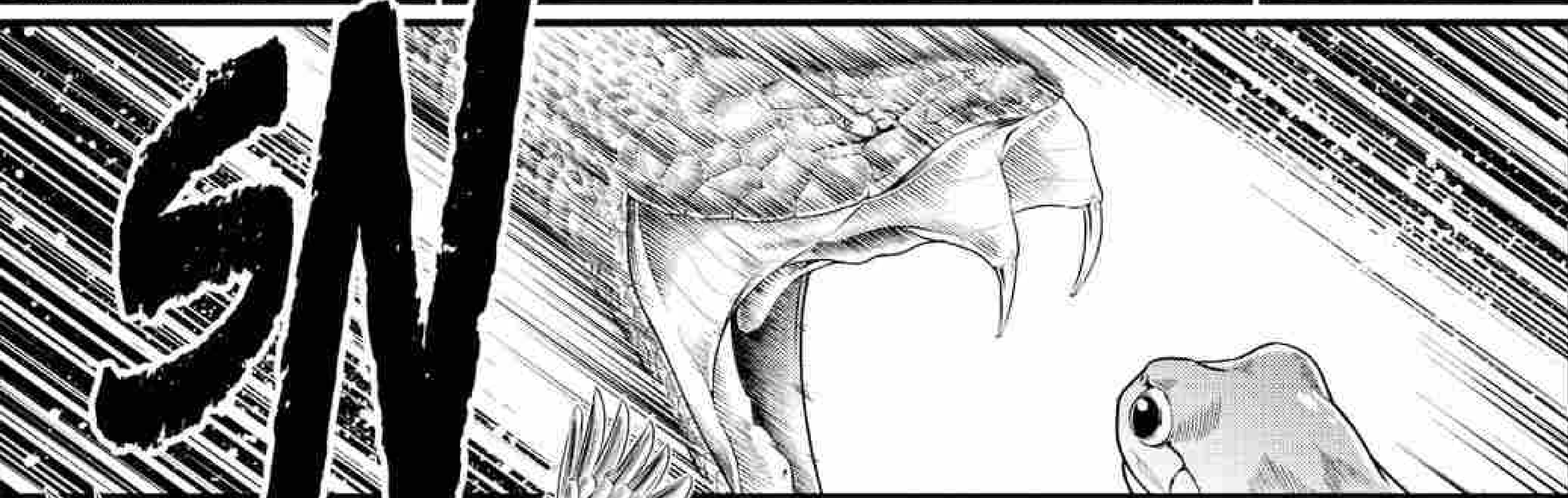
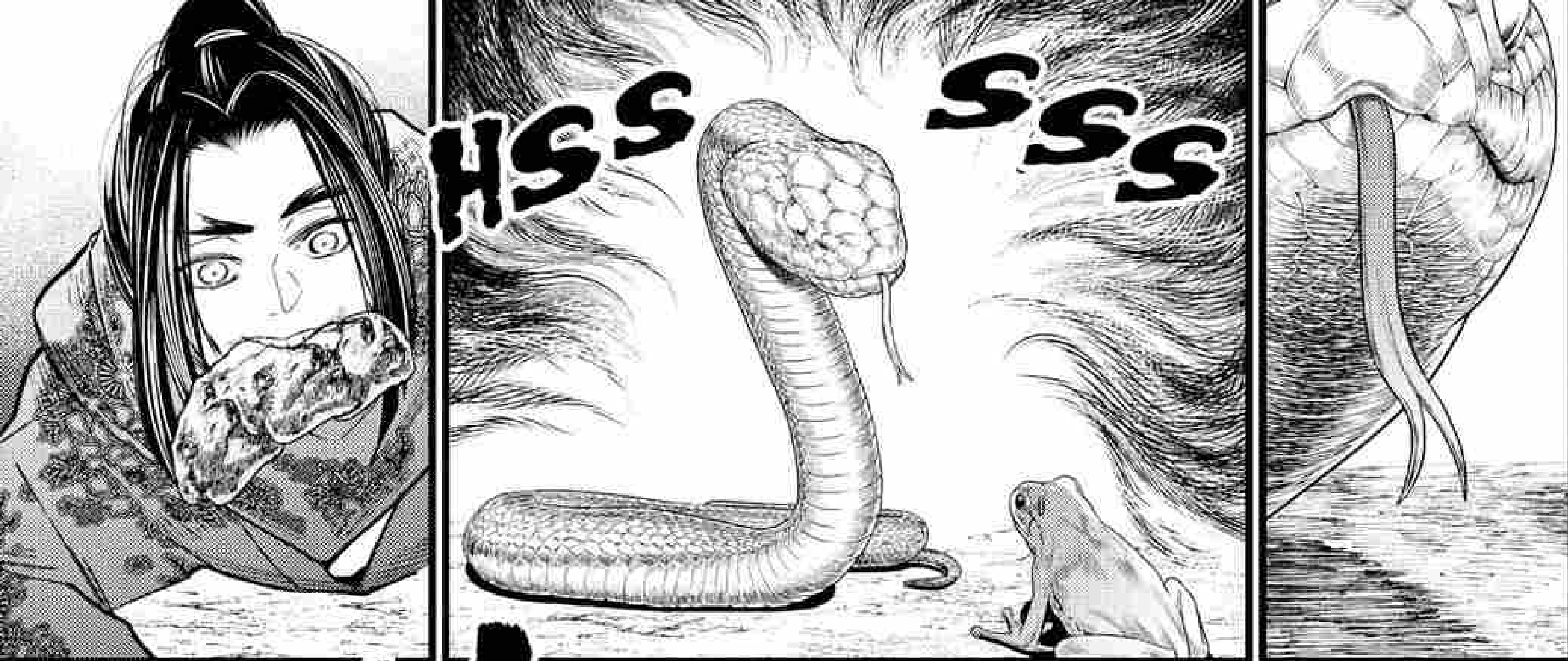
UH-
OH...



...BUT IN
NATURE.

KOJIRO
SOUGHT
LEARNING
NOT
IN THE
DOJO...

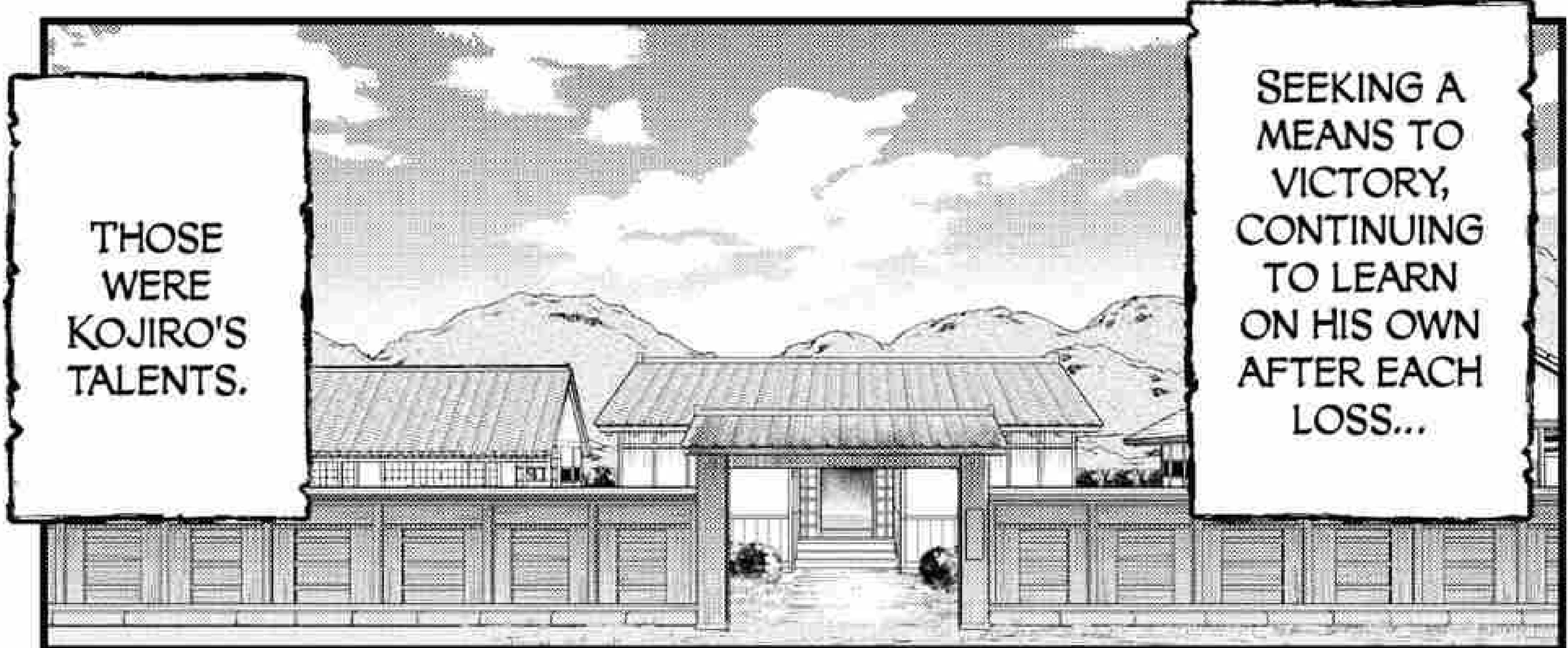






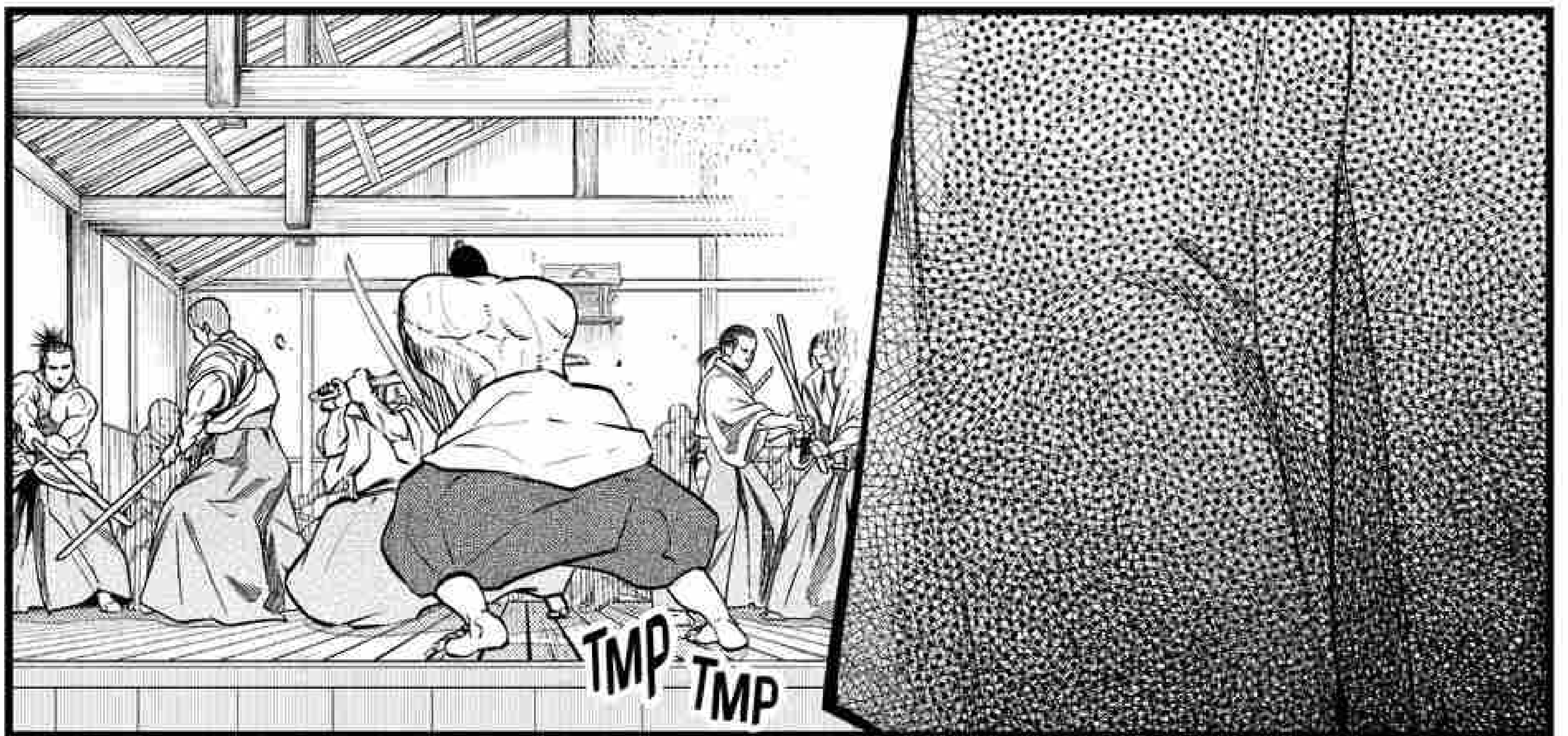
THAT'S
A PART
OF MY
TRAINING
TOO!

LEARNING
TIMING
FROM
WILD
BEASTS...

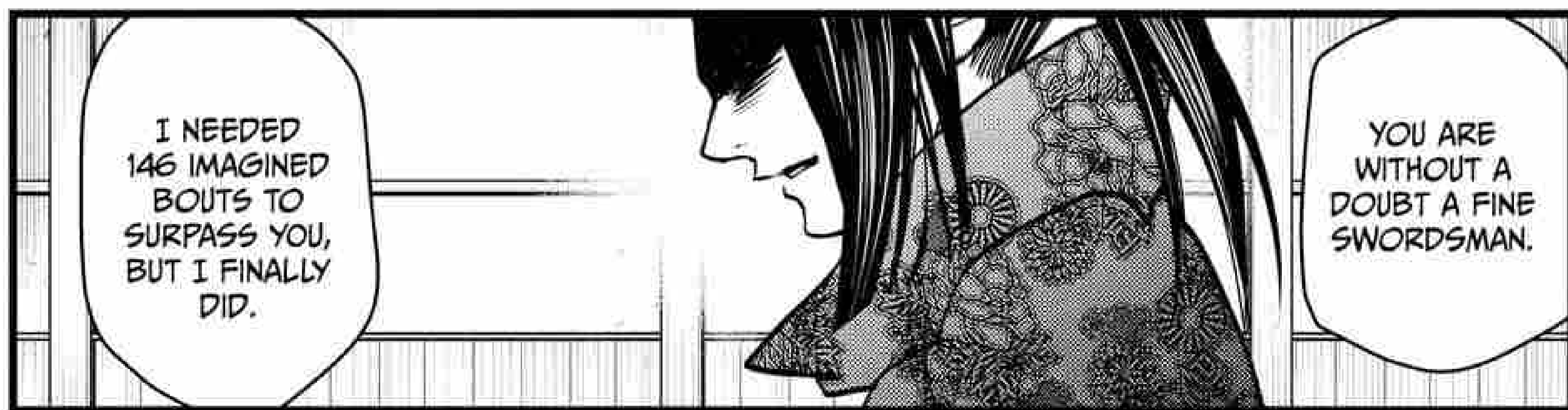


THOSE
WERE
KOJIRO'S
TALENTS.

SEEKING A
MEANS TO
VICTORY,
CONTINUING
TO LEARN
ON HIS OWN
AFTER EACH
LOSS...

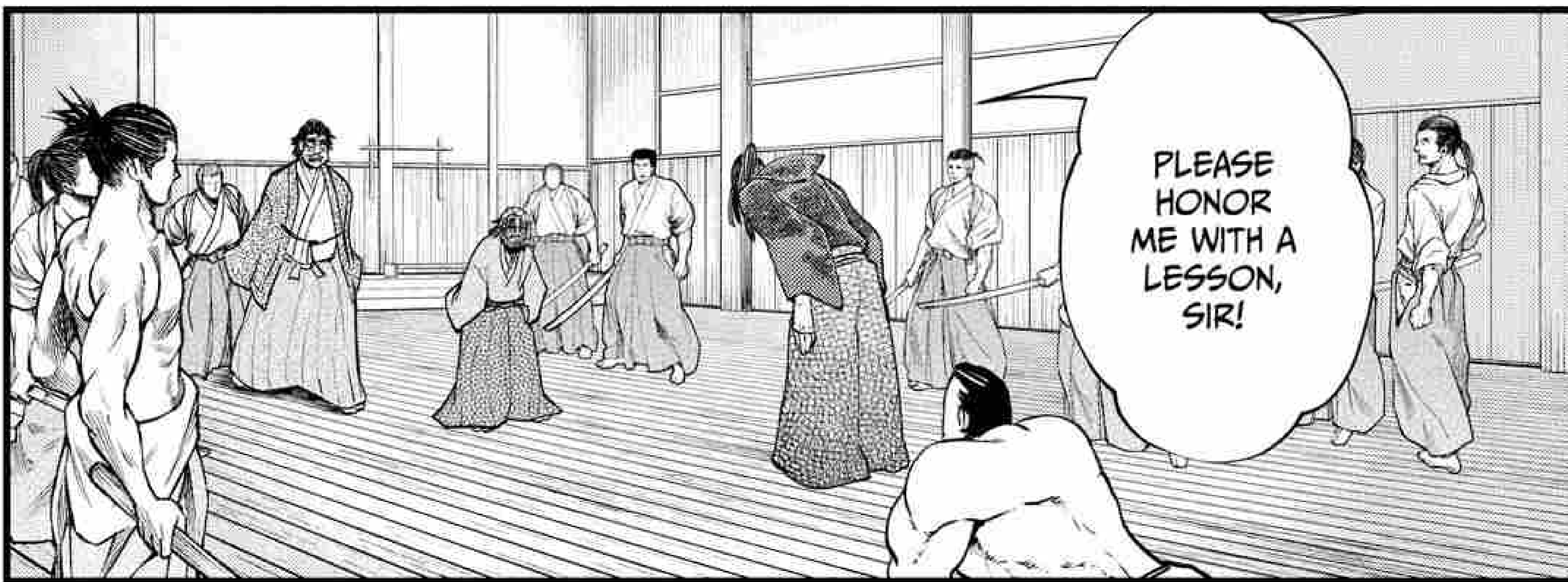












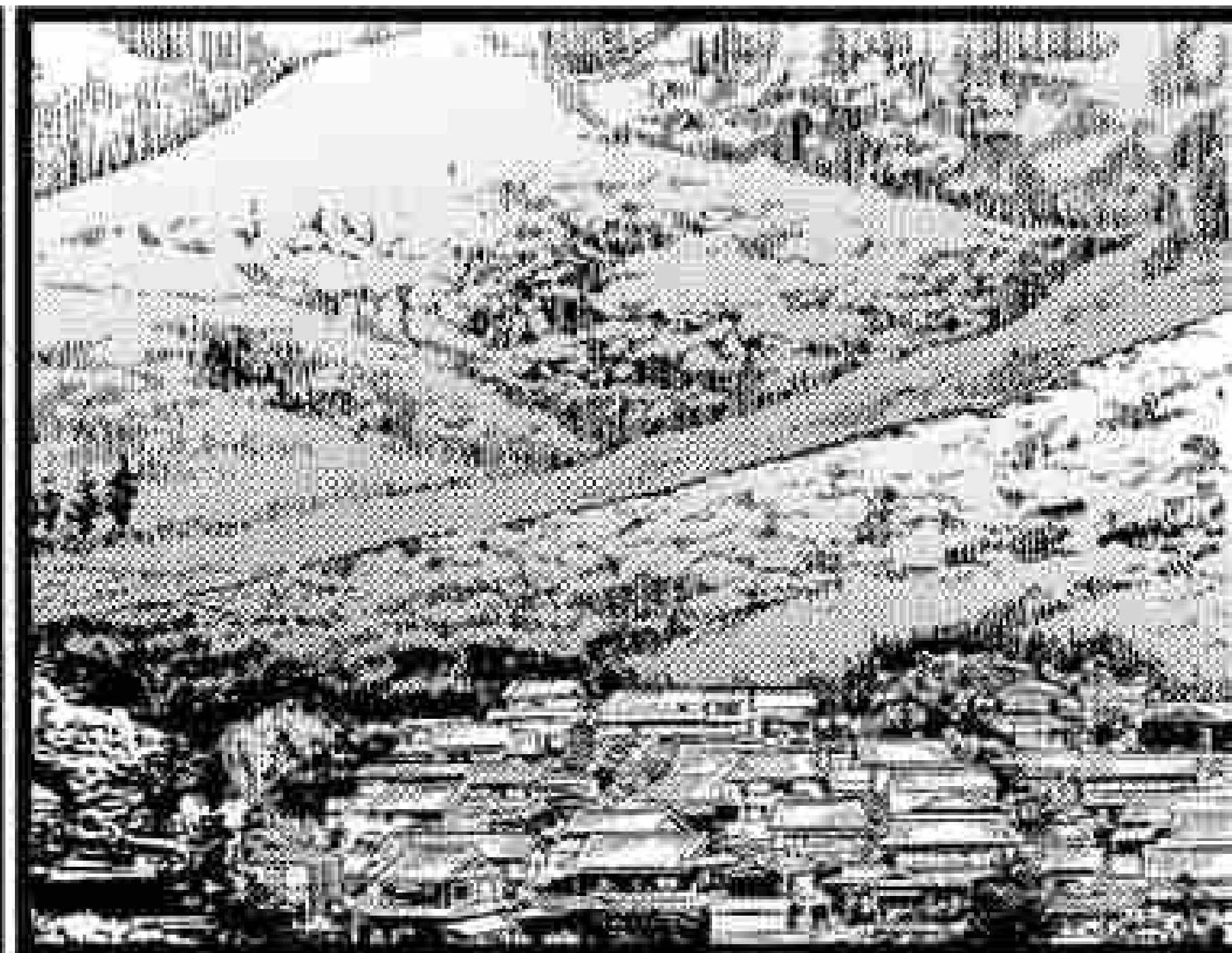


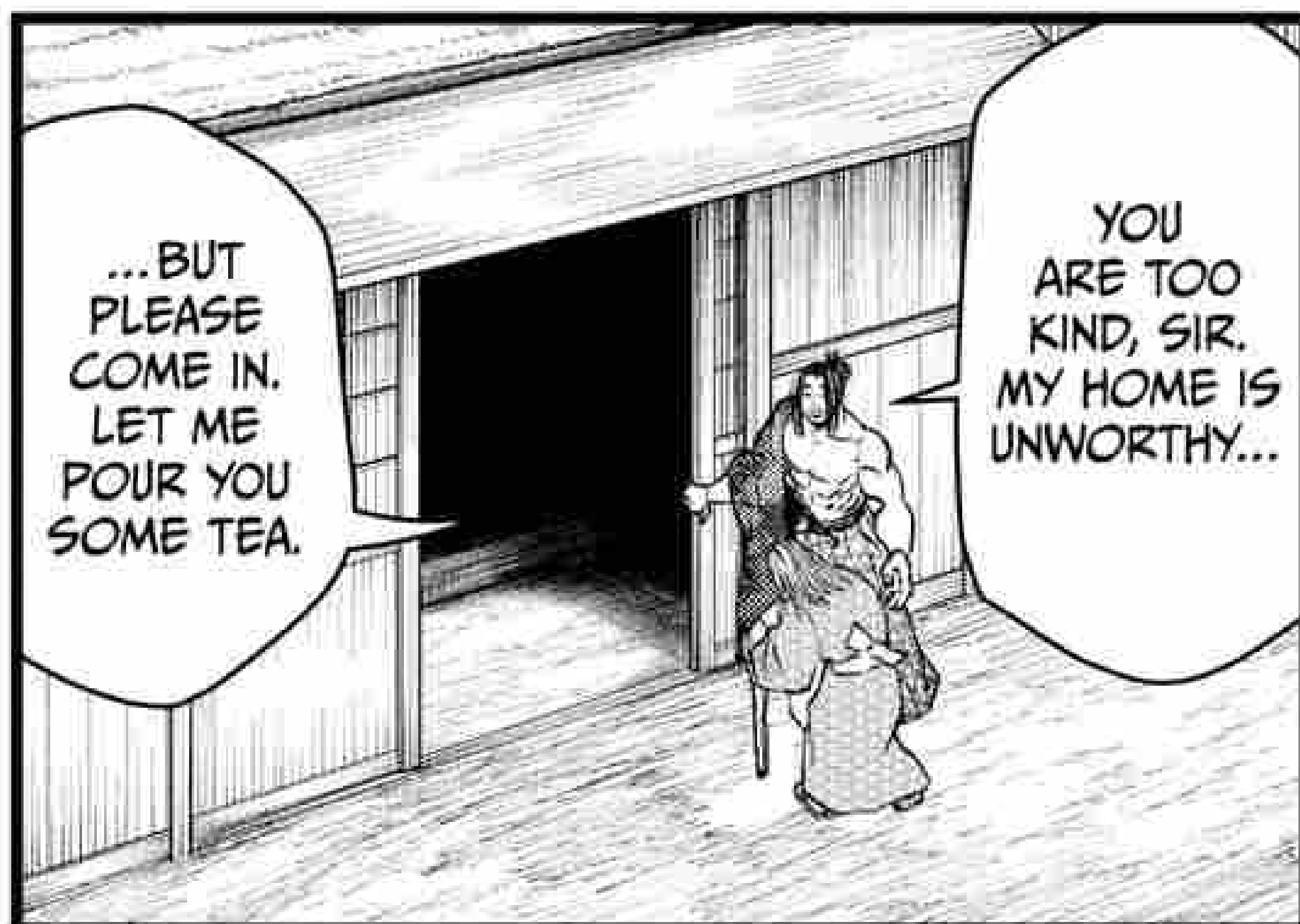
...KOJIRO
ONCE
AGAIN
STOPPED
SHOWING
UP AT THE
DOJO.



AND
AFTER
THAT...

A FEW YEARS LATER...







...COULD
SEE THE
TRUTH.



TH-
THIS
IS...

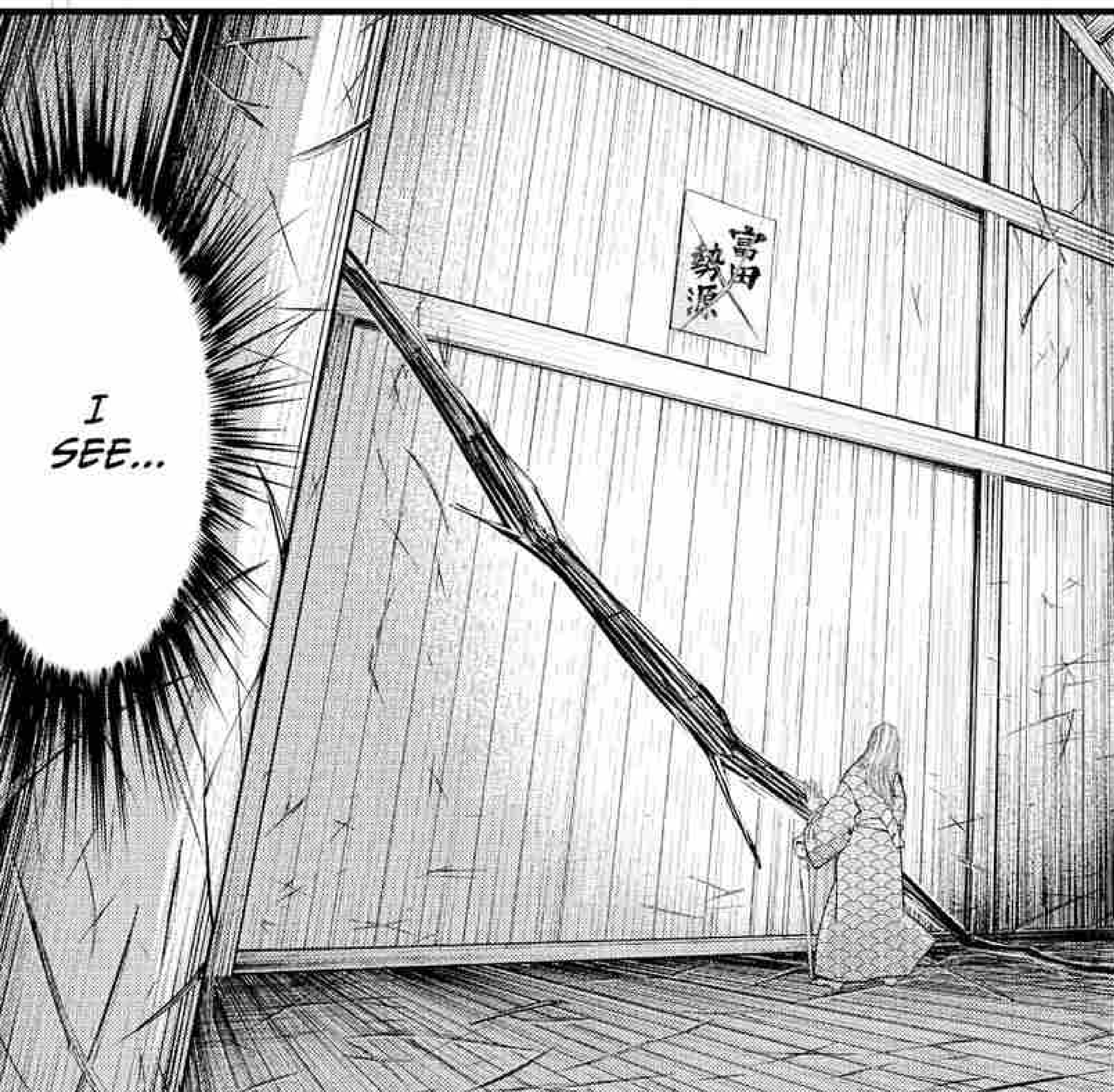
...EVEN
HIS
BLIND
EYES...

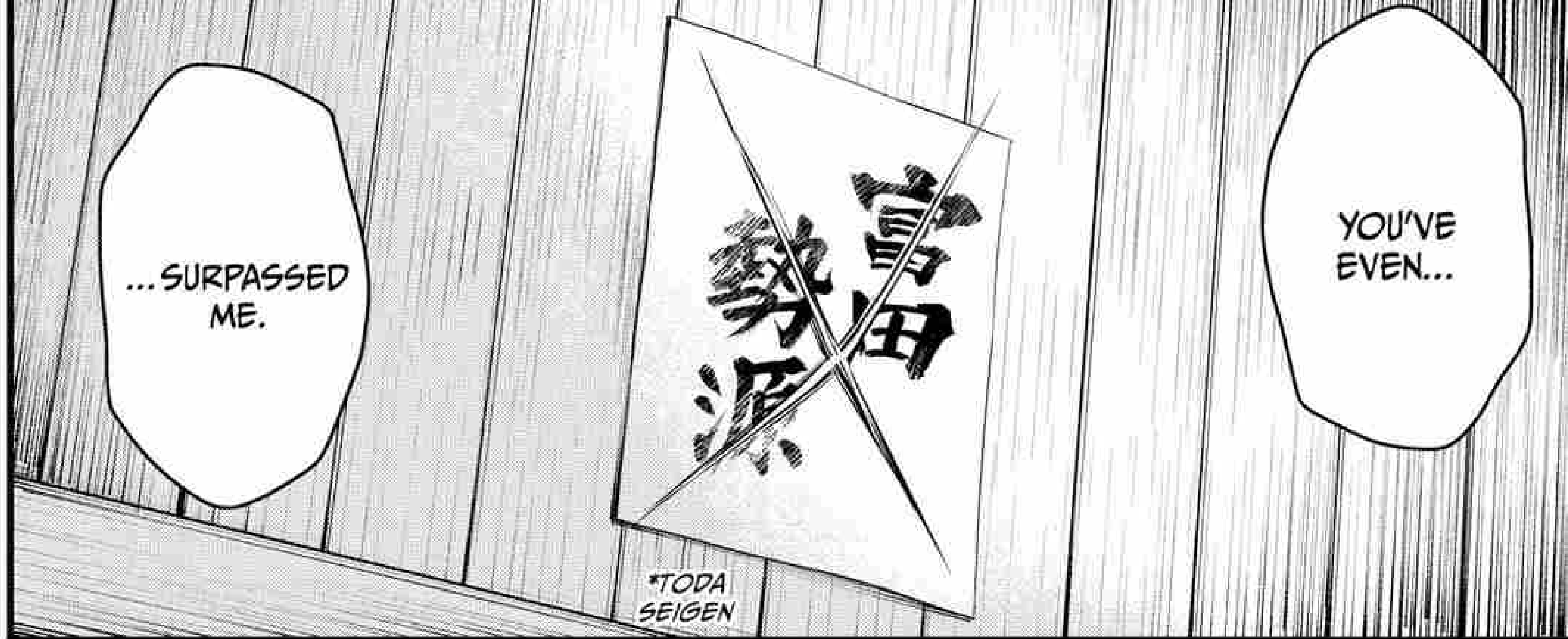






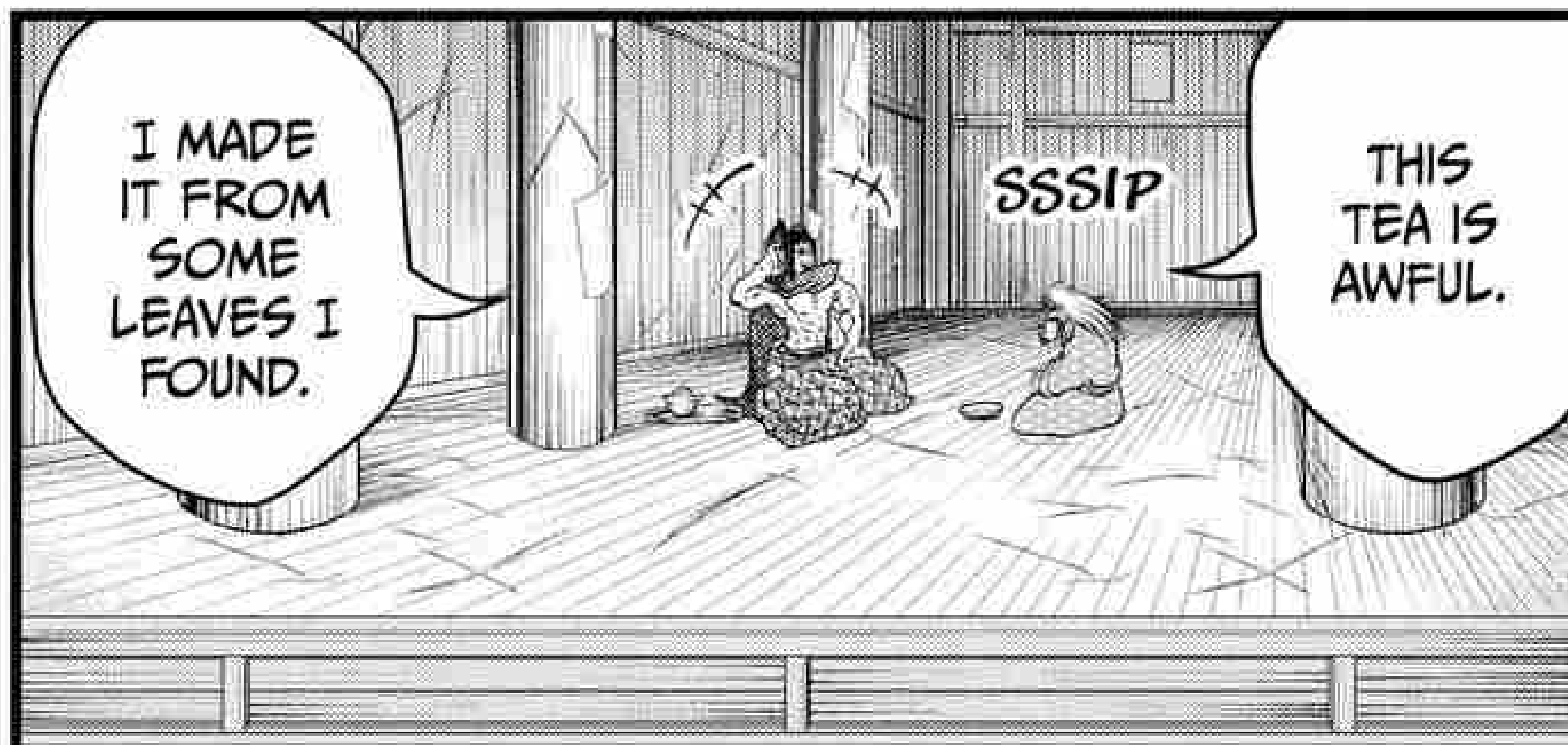
ONLY TO
BETTER
HIMSELF.





...SURPASSED ME.

YOU'VE EVEN...



I MADE IT FROM SOME LEAVES I FOUND.

SSSIP

THIS TEA IS AWFUL.



ONE DAY YOU MAY EVEN BE THE LORD OF YOUR OWN DOMAIN AND CASTLE.

KOJIRO, I AM RECOMMENDING YOU AS THE INSTRUCTOR TO THE ASAKURA CLAN.



THERE IS NOTHING FOR ME TO ENJOY HERE ANYMORE.

MASTER... I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, BUT I'VE DECIDED TO LEAVE ECHIZEN SOON.







SASAKI KOJIRO CONTINUED TO BE
DEFEATED TIME AND TIME AGAIN.

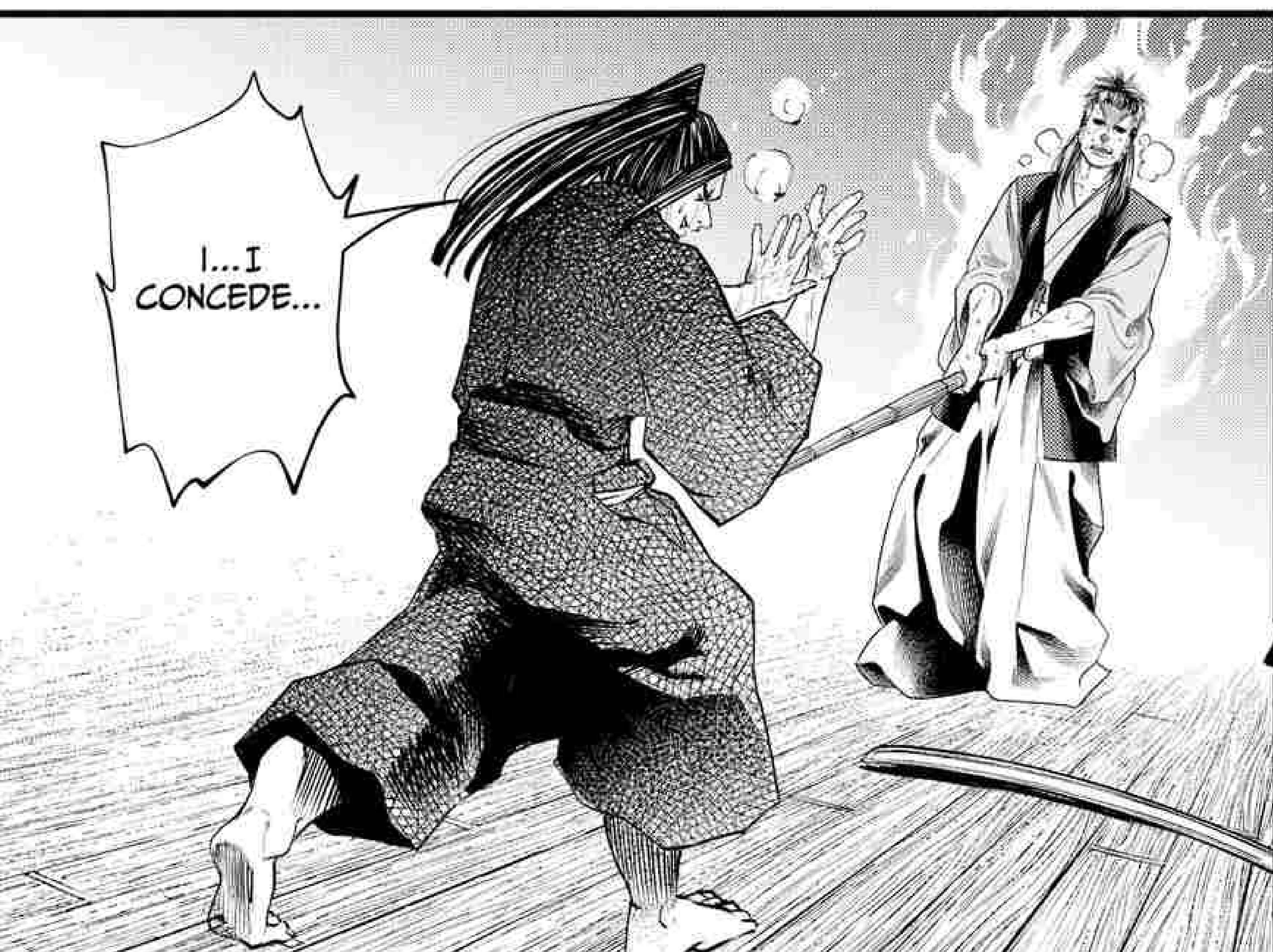


I
CONCEDE.



YOU'VE
GOT
A LOT
LEARN.

ITO ITTOSAI KAGEHISA
FOUNDER OF THE ITTO STYLE
OF SWORDSMANSHIP







I
CONCEDE...



I
COULDN'T
DO A
DAMN
THING!

HA HA...
HE TRULY IS
THE SWORD
SAINT!

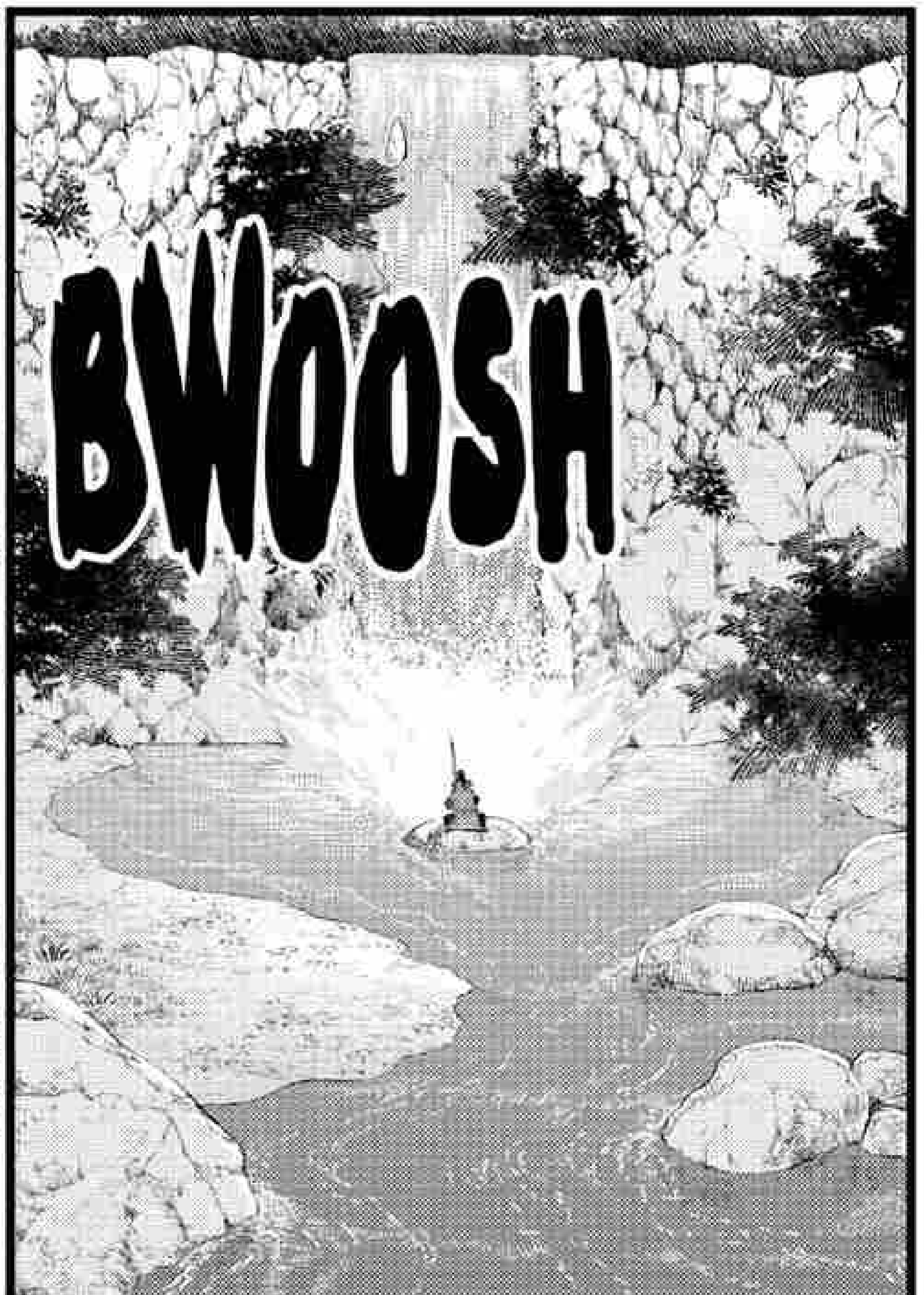
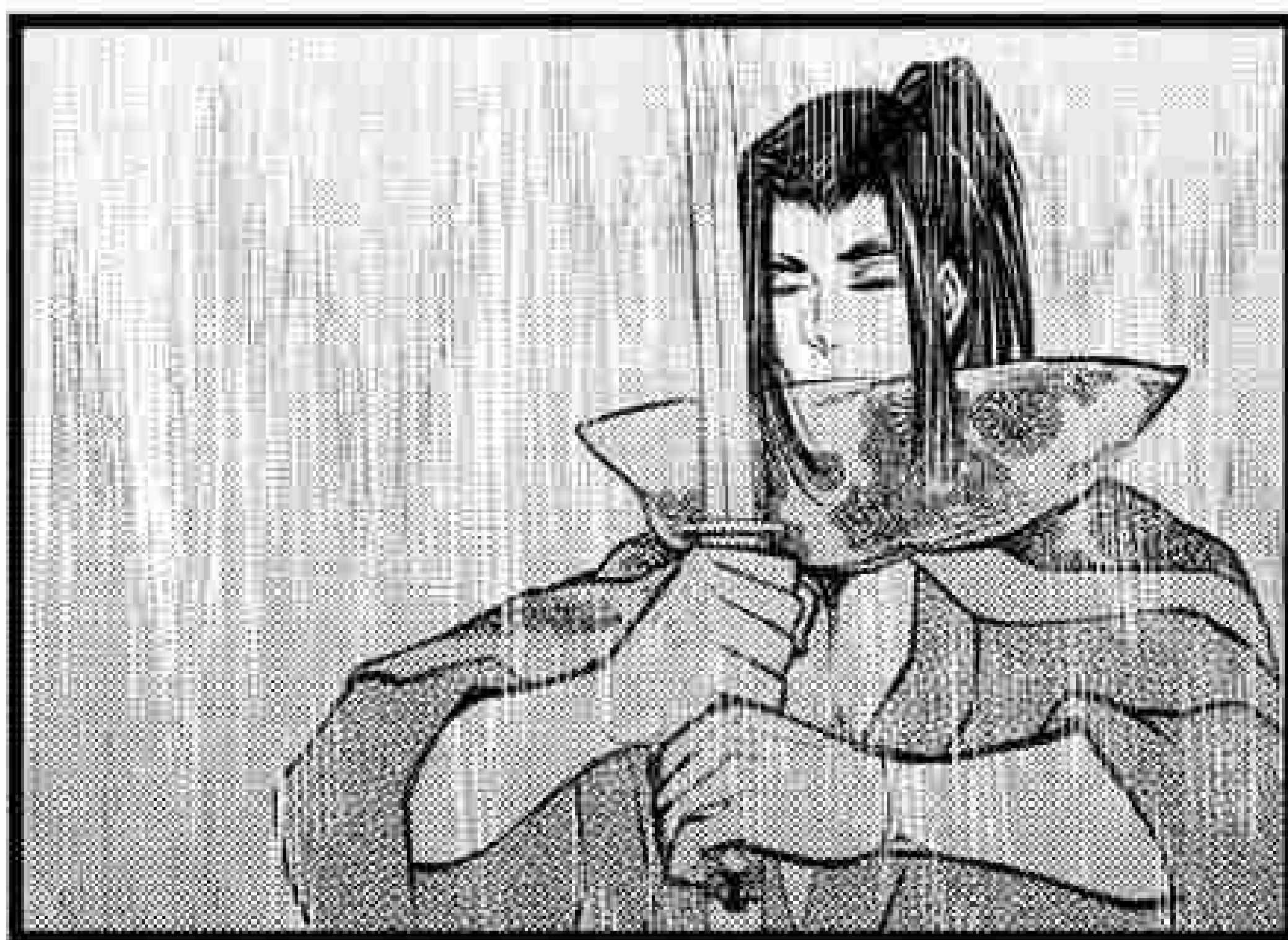


...AND
KEPT
LOSING.

...KOJIRO
SOUGHT
OPPONENTS
AGAINST
WHOM HE
KNEW HE
STOOD NO
CHANCE...

LIKE THE
DRY LAND
THIRSTING
FOR
WATER...

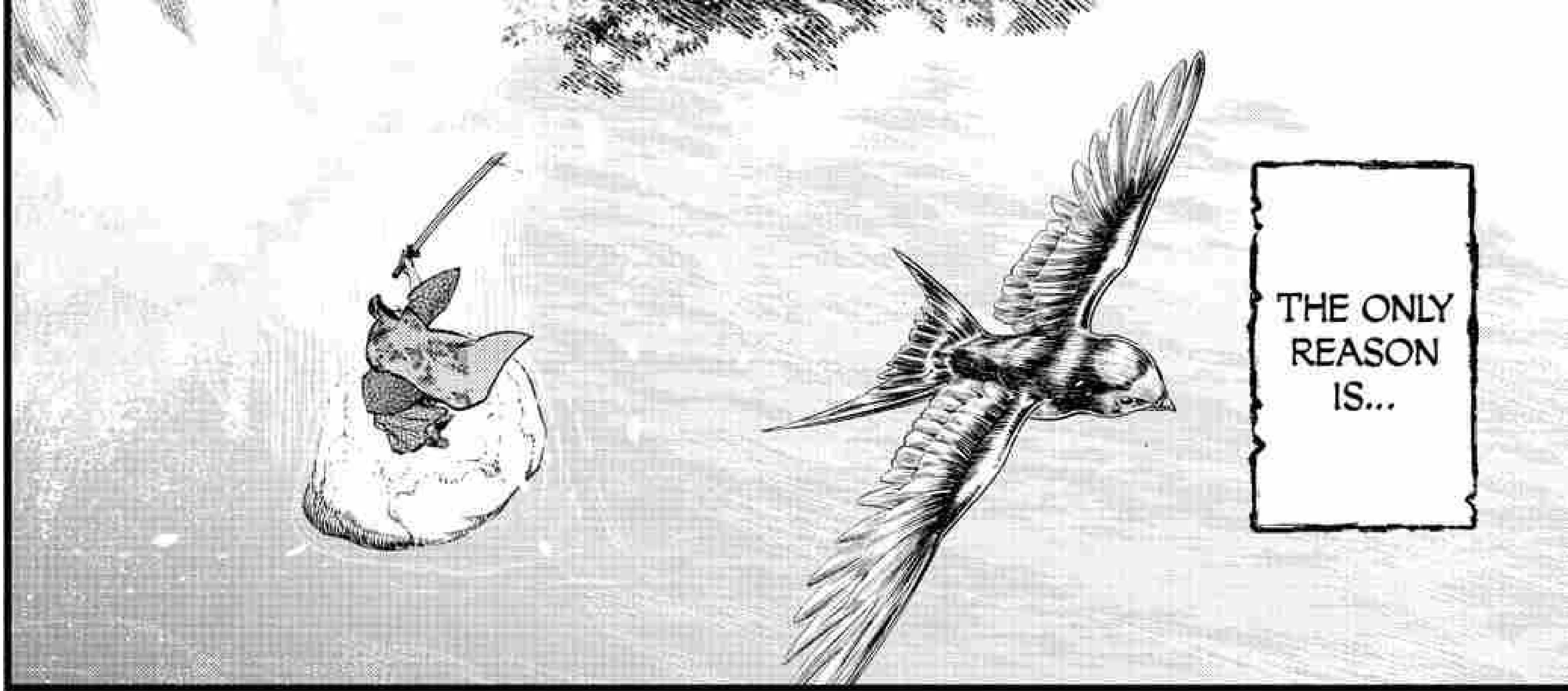
PLIP PLIP



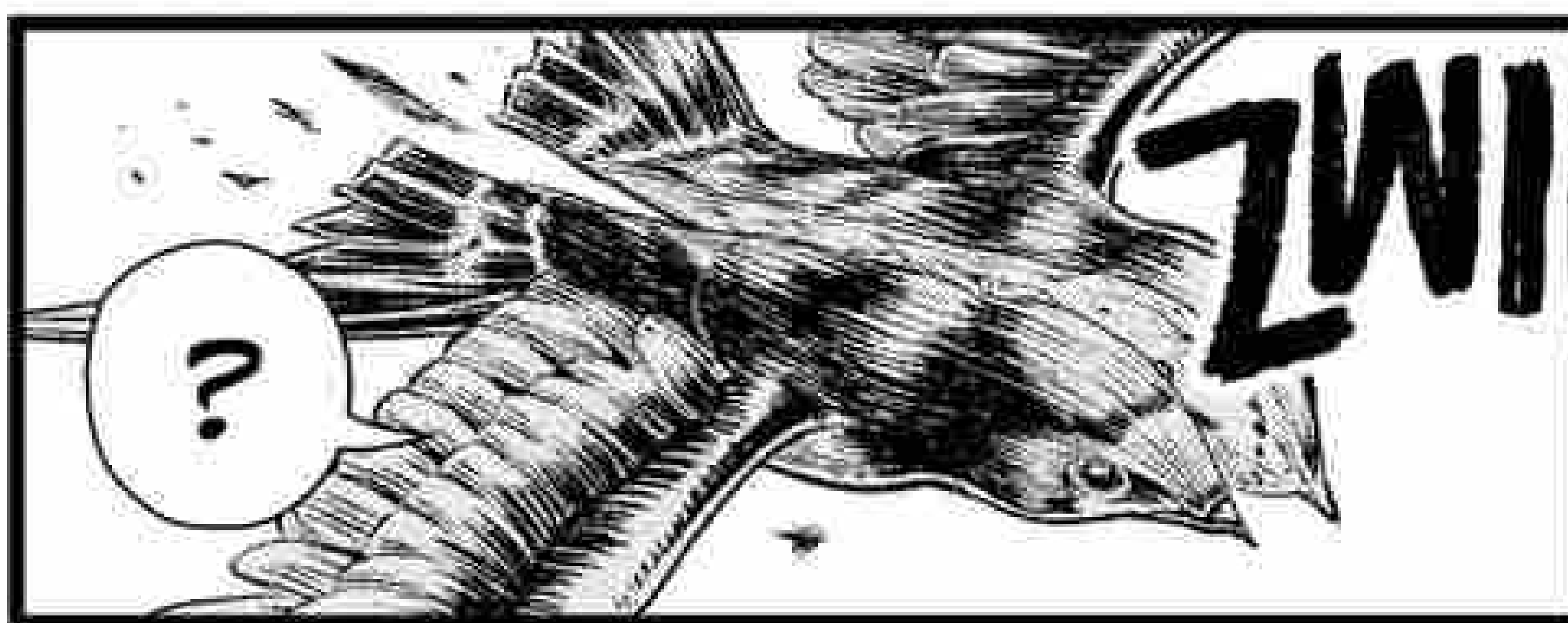


...UNTIL
THAT
DAY ON
GANRYU
ISLAND?

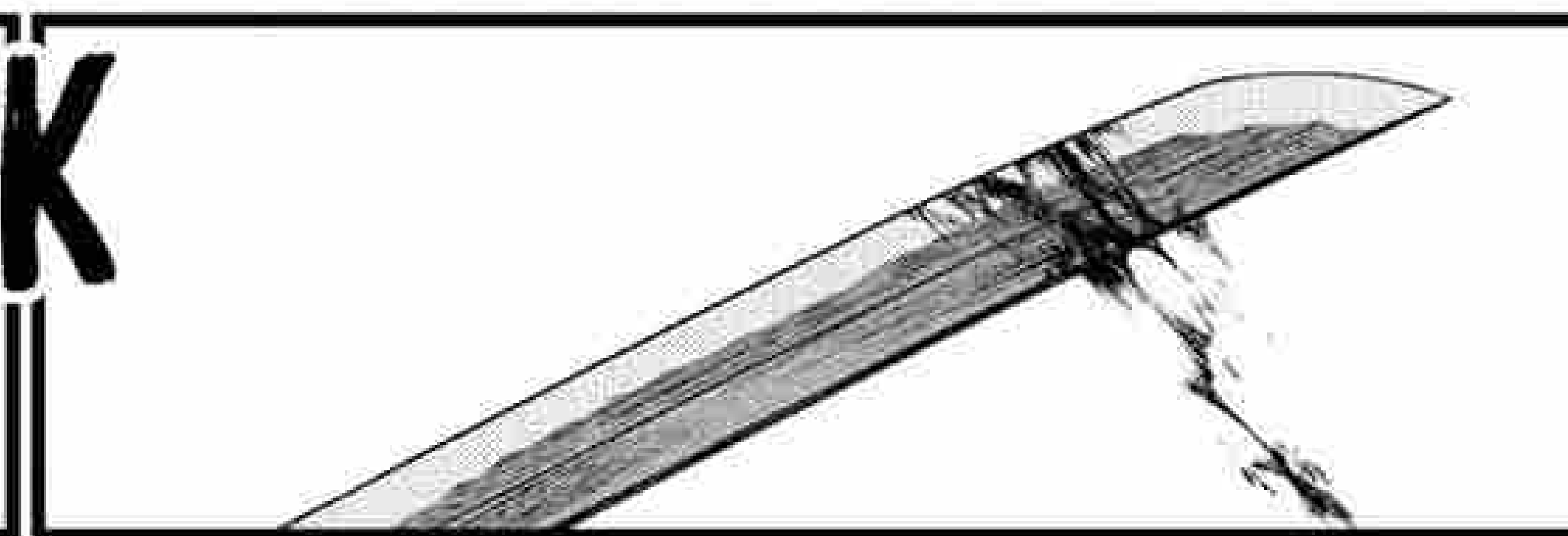
WHY DOES
HISTORY
NOT SPEAK
OF SASAKI
KOJIRO ...



THE ONLY
REASON
IS...



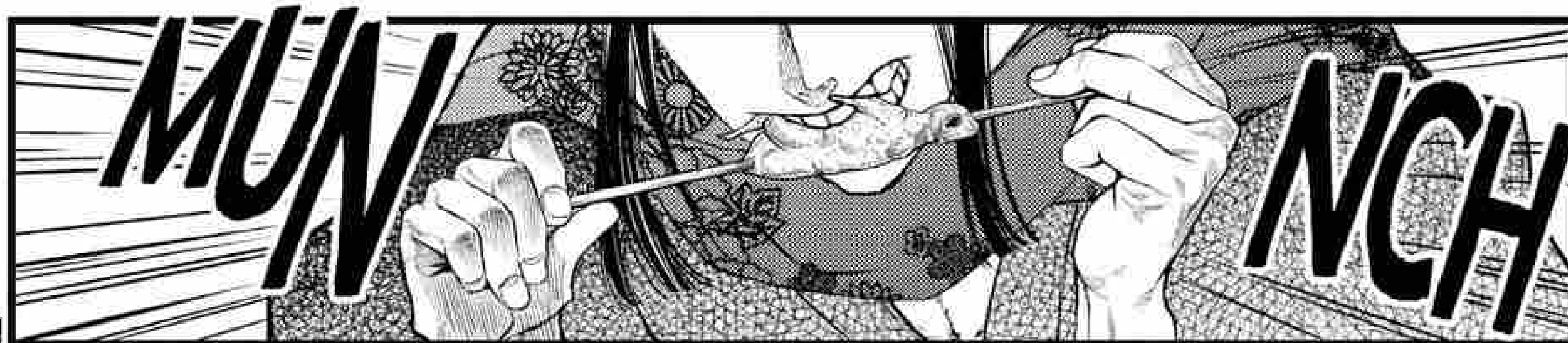
ZWIK



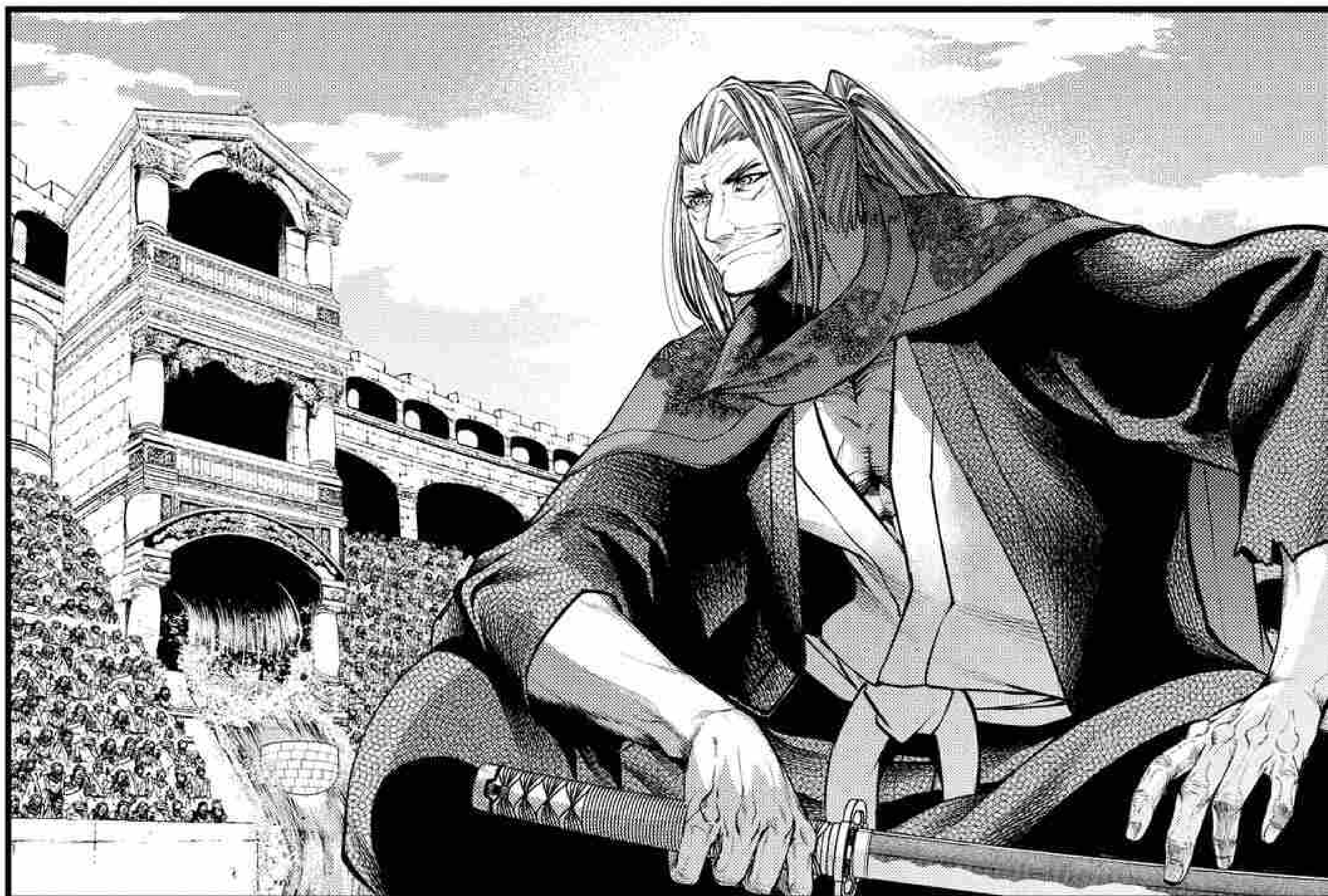
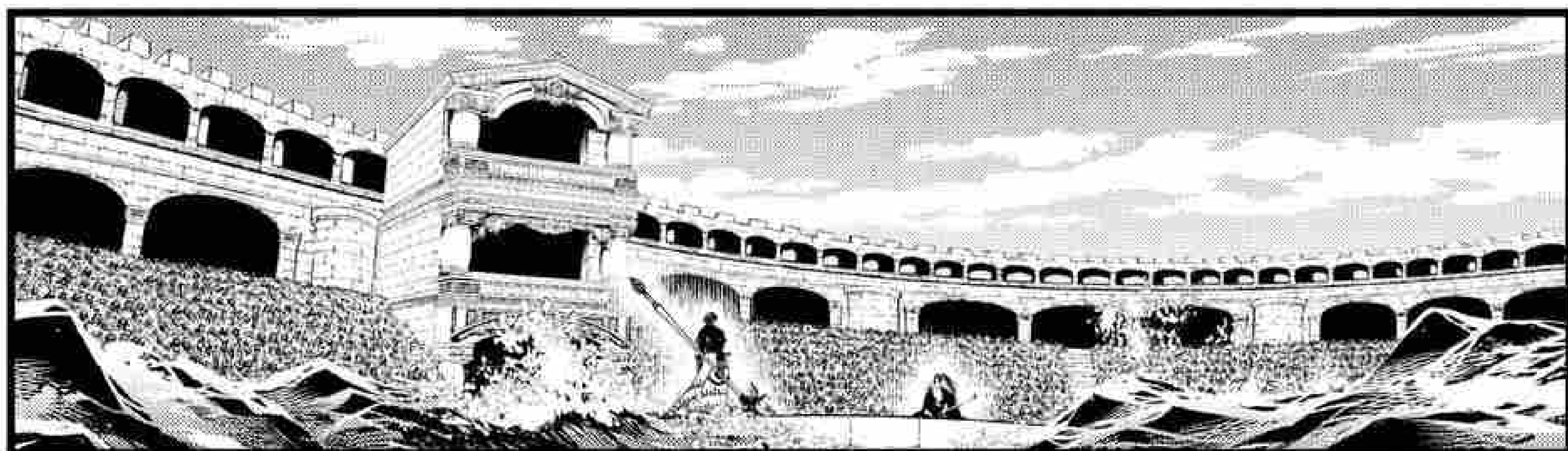
...AS HE
STROVE TO
BECOME THE
ULTIMATE
SWORDSMAN!

...HE
KEPT
LOSING...





AND THAT IS HOW HISTORY'S
GREATEST LOSER WAS BORN!

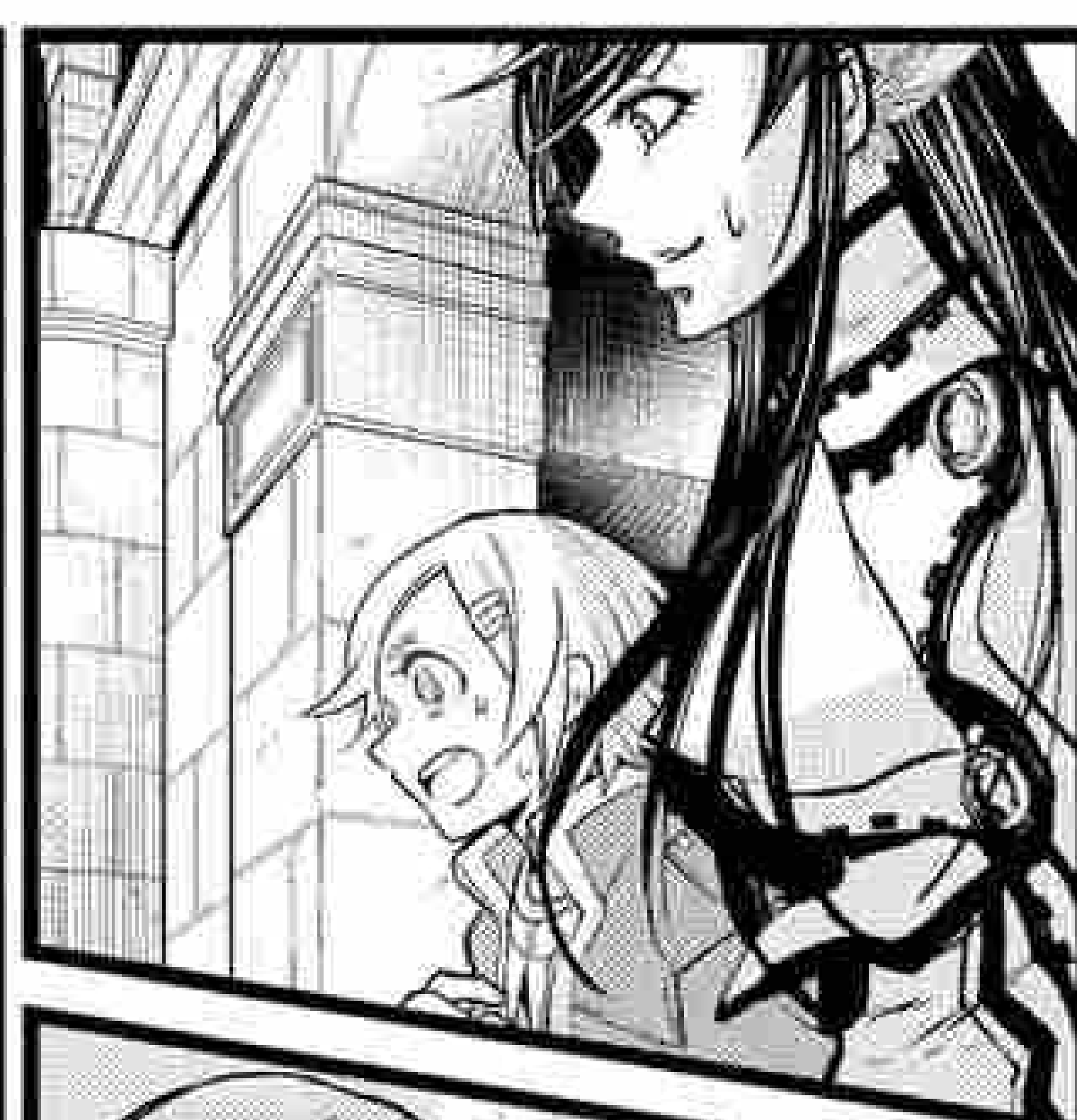


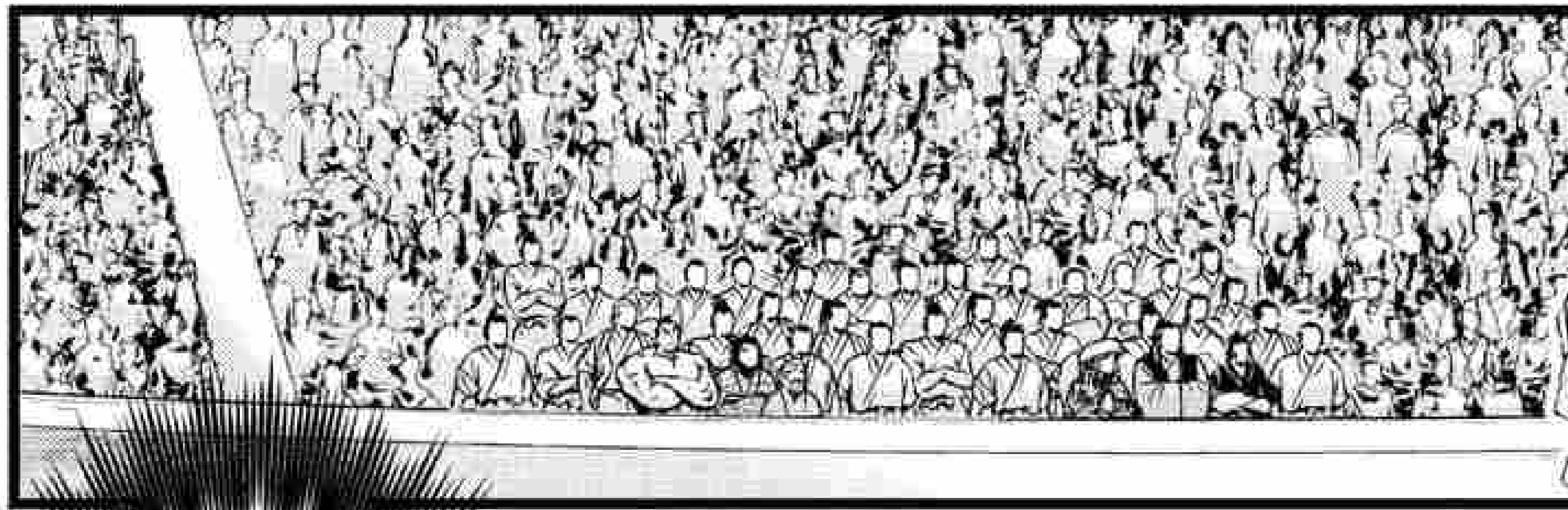
...I DOUBT
THIS GUY
WILL LET ME
CONCEDE.

...BUT...



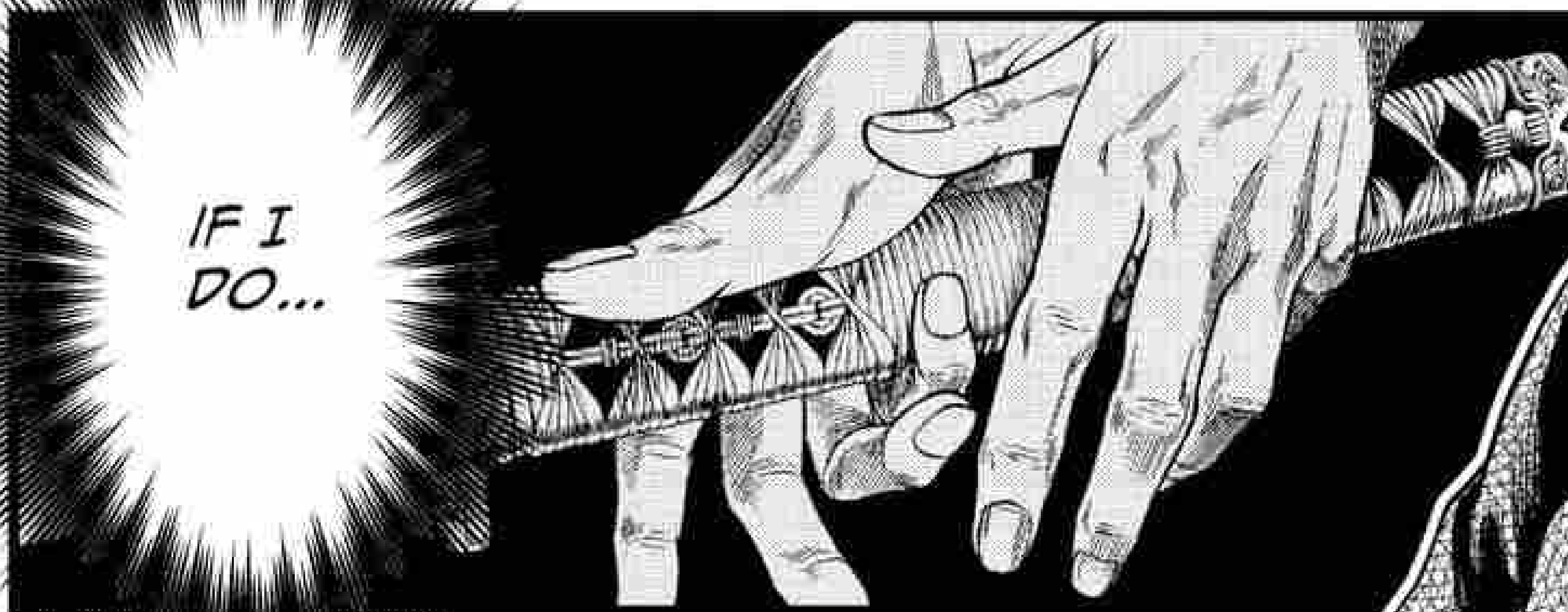
I REALLY
DON'T WANT
TO DIE...



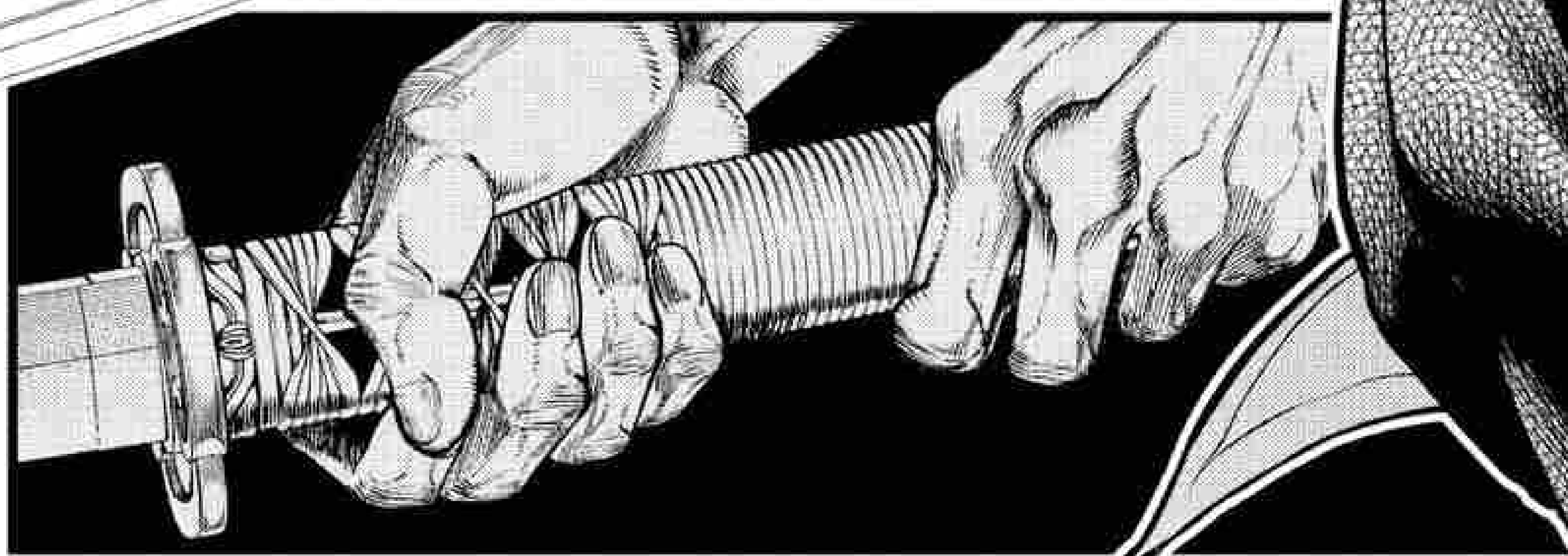


I
CAN'T
RUN.

IF I
DO...

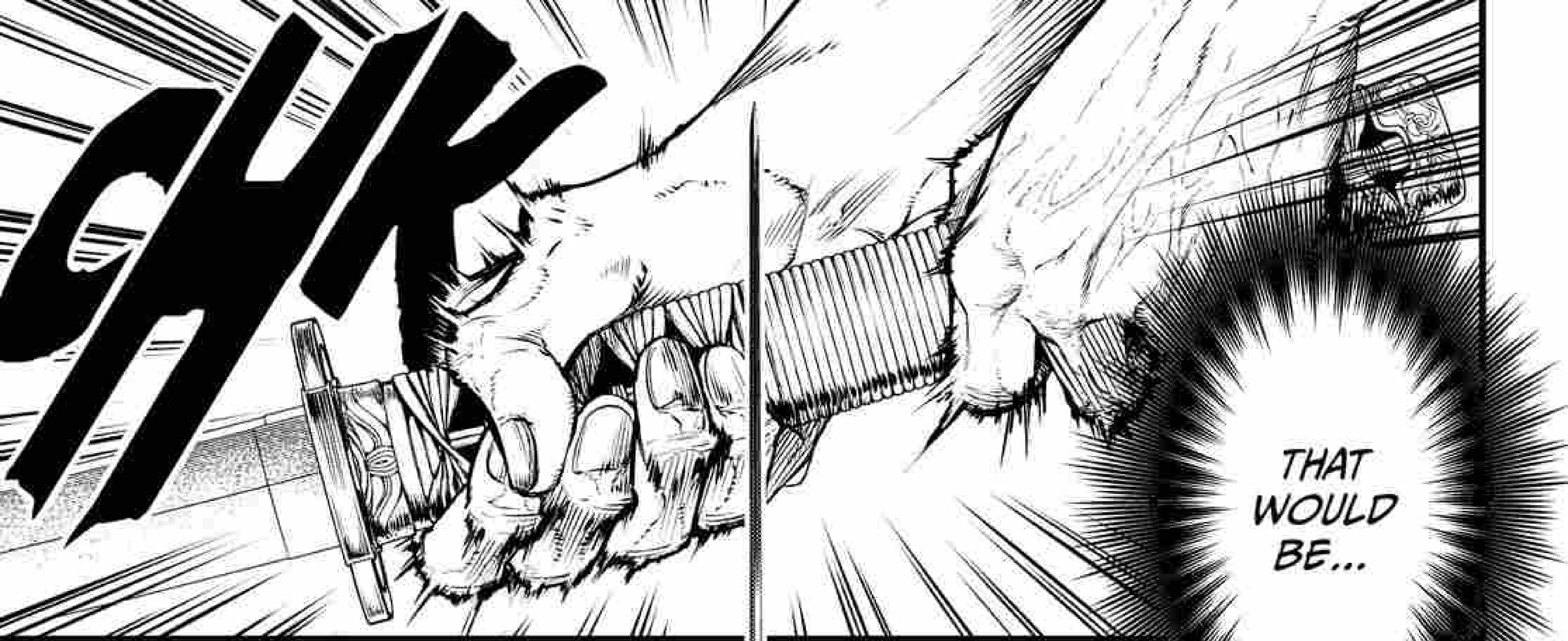


...I'LL BE
DISHONOR-
ING...



...EVERYONE
AND EVERY-
THING THAT
PAVED THE
WAY FOR ME.
EVERYTHING
THAT BECAME
MY FLESH
AND BLOOD.





THAT
WOULD
BE...



...UNACCEPT-
ABLE!



HERE
I GO!



THE FIRST TECHNIQUE SASAKI
KOJIRO UNLEASHED WAS...



...DOWN
FROM ABOVE
HIS HEAD
WITH ALL HIS
HEART AND
SOUL.

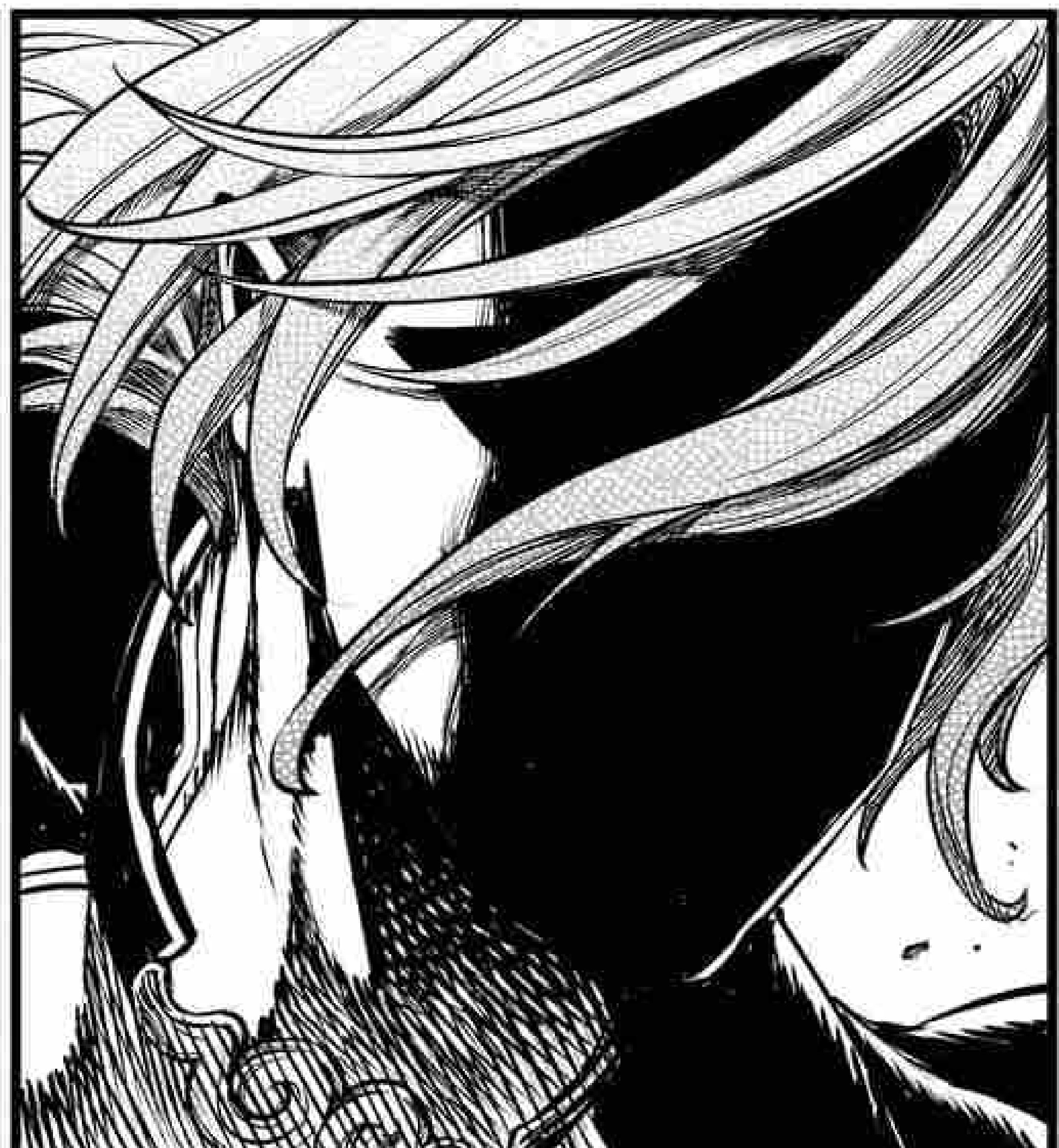
...SWINGING HIS
ALMOST THREE-
FOOT LONG
SWORD, BIZEN
NAGAMITSU,
ALSO CALLED
MONOHOSHIZAO
OR "LAUNDRY
POLE"...

HOWEVER...



...MADE
IT NEARLY
IMPOSSIBLE
TO BRING
IT TO A
SUDDEN
STOP.

MONOHO-
SHIZAO
WEIGHED
HALF AS
MUCH MORE
THAN AN
AVERAGE
SWORD.
THE LAW OF
INERTIA...



BUT...



ALL OF
THE
DEFEATS
SASAKI
KOJIRO
HAD
EXPERI-
ENCED...

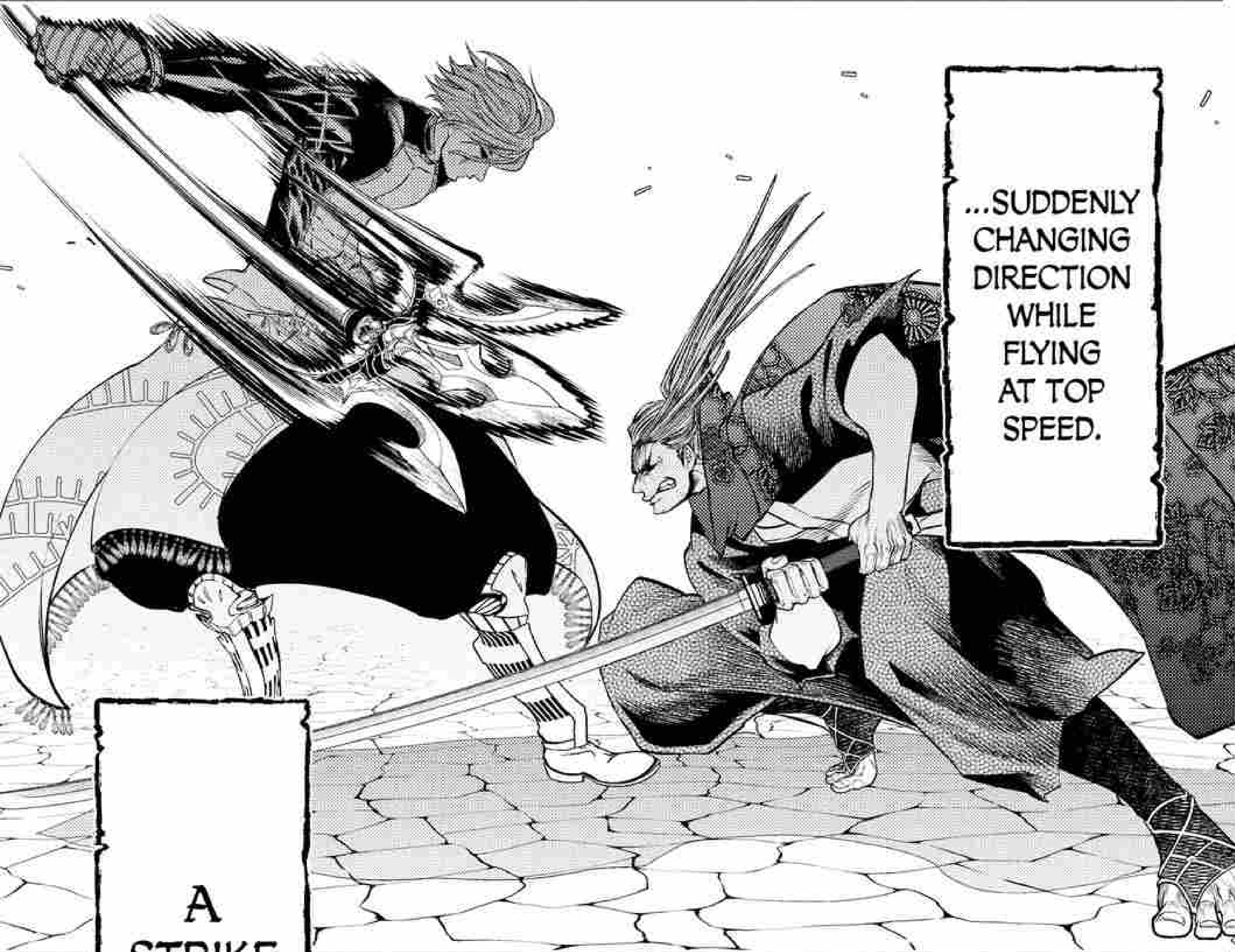


...GAVE
RISE TO A
SPECIAL
TECHNIQUE.



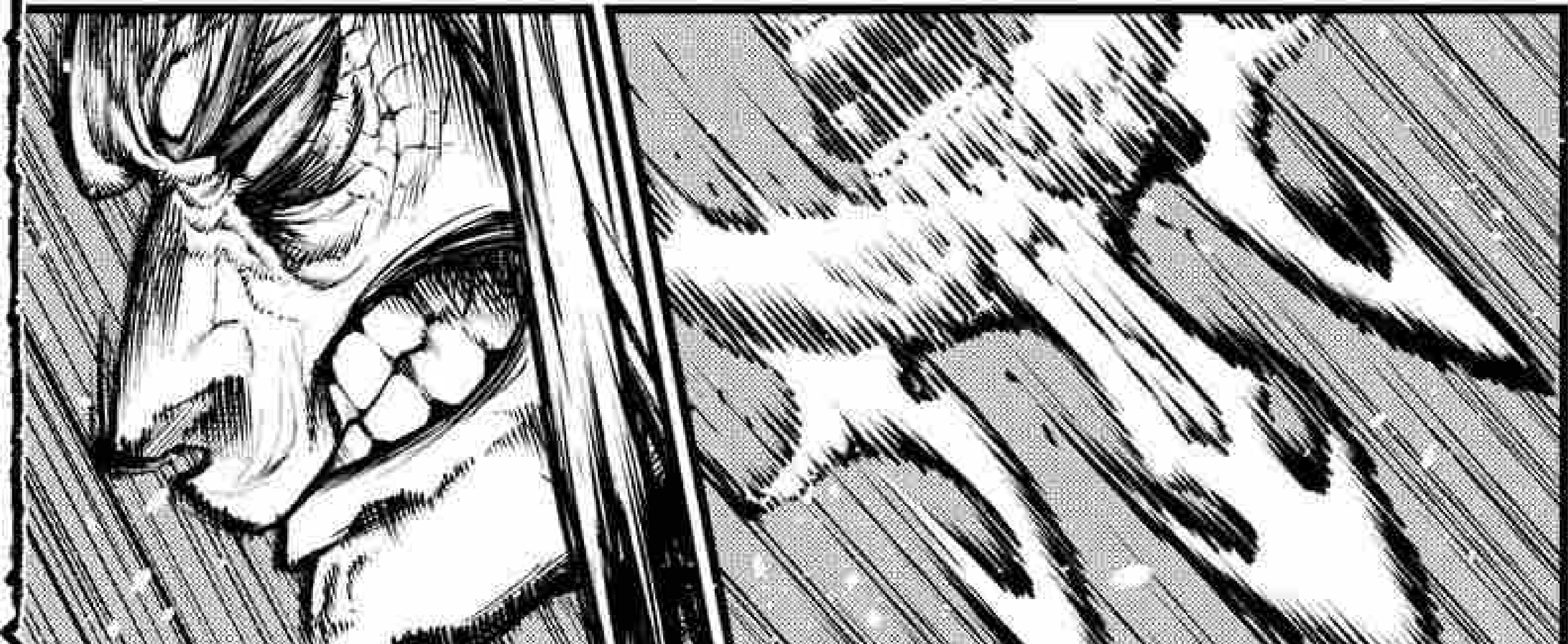


LIKE A
SWALLOW
...



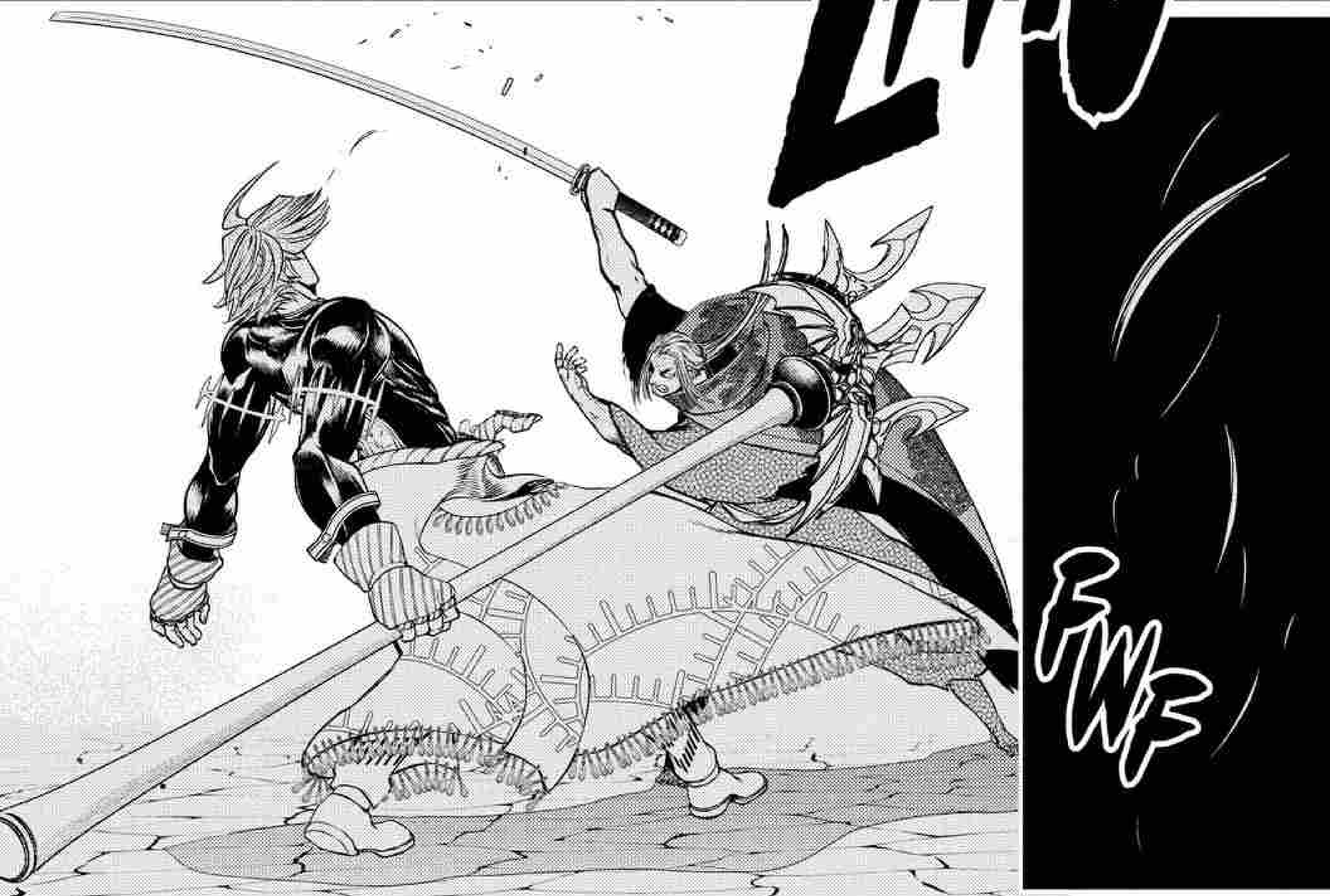
...SUDDENLY
CHANGING
DIRECTION
WHILE
FLYING
AT TOP
SPEED.

A
STRIKE
OF
GODLY
QUICK-
NESS.



TSUBAME GAESHI~SWALLOW COUNTER!





WHAT A
SURPRISE.
FOR
POSEIDON...

HMM...



CAN HE
SWING
QUICKER
THAN
POSEIDON?!

WHA?!
THAT
HUMAN...
HE'S
FAST!



...TO
LOOK A
HUMAN...

...DIRECTLY
IN THE EYE.



...YOUNG
ONE.

YOU'VE
FINALLY
MET MY
GAZE...

Record of Ragnarok



EARLY
CHARACTER
DESIGN

POSEIDON

Record of Ragnarok

RECORD OF
RAGNAROK